WITH SEEING EYES

The Unusual Story of an Observant Thinker at the Front

HAROLD MORTON KRAMER.
In the field, with shrapnel helmet, and gas mask at the *alerte*.

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The Unusual Story of an Observant Thinker at the Front

By
HAROLD MORTON KRAMER

ILLUSTRATED

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With Seeing Eyes

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WITH SEEING EYES

CHAPTER I

"WE'LL BE OVER—WE'RE COMING OVER!"

OUTSIDE, the February blizzard shrieked and tore at everything movable; within the hotel an assemblage of snow-bound travelers crowded the dining-room and with unusual enthusiasm cheered the radiant-faced girl—a member of the vaudeville company held prisoners by the storm—who was singing "The Star-Spangled Banner."

News had just reached this storm-isolated spot that the President had severed diplomatic relations with Germany, and the thrill that shot through America had caused this group to forget all else in their discussion of his action. An impromptu patriotic program resulted, with

the crowd cheering its endorsement of the nation's decision.

True, our people had been repeatedly told that severing diplomatic relations " would not necessarily mean war," but this night no one doubted that at last America was going into the war. Numbered among the blizzard's victims in that Minnesota hotel, I listened to the singing and the patriotic exuberance—and as countless thousands of others were doing at that moment, I faced a great question and struggled to find the proper answer. That my soldiering days were past seemed certain. A heart weakness bequeathed to me by my period of service in the Spanish War determined that.

But if America went in, was there not some way in which I could have a part? It was a question to which I found no satisfactory answer for many weeks.

Spring came with its blossom-glory and then gave way to the maturity of summer, a summer when a pleasure-loving people paused, caught their breath in the first agony of sacrifice and then slowly went to their knees in prayer for guidance and strength.

America had gone in.

By midsummer American soldiers were in France. Before the first frosts had made gorgeous the leaves of oak and maple or the sumac by the roadsides had flamed into scarlet, officers' training-camps had turned out their first classes and the youth of the nation, carefully selected, was marching into the cantonments singing:

"Good-bye, Ma,
Good-bye, Pa,
Good-bye, mule, with your old hee-haw!"

Oh, the wondrousness of Youth! The joy of its strength! The marvel of its light-heartedness! In those first days it won for the khaki the title of "The Singing Army," and in after days, with the hot breath of battle withering its ranks, Youth justified the title it had won.

And so America went in.

Then there came an early December day when I stood on the deck of a ship, the *Espagne,* of the French line, as we slipped away from a North River pier and started for the great sea, beneath which lurked sub-

marines and beyond which was the Great Adventure. An incoming vessel whistled a salute to us, their band assembled forward and played "The Star-Spangled Banner," while the passengers of both ships lined the rails and fluttered handkerchiefs.

Curiously enough, as I heard "The Star-Spangled Banner" played on the deck of the other ship my memory jumped back to that February night when a snow-bound vaudeville singer had roused a hotel full of people to new-found heights of patriotism with the magic of its challenge. That stormy night I had sorrowed because my soldiering days were past. In truth, they were—but this December evening I trod the deck of an ocean liner wearing the uniform of the Y. M. C. A., and I was bound for France to take my place beside those who were privileged to carry rifles or serve the artillery or do battle in the air—or what not. For two months I had worn the uniform, serving in Camp Zachary Taylor, Louisville, Kentucky, and then I had been accepted for overseas service.

Physical examination? Oh, yes, there had

been one in New York. But—well, here I was. So let's not discuss the "hows" and the "whys" of that stage of my journey to the trenches. Over there was work for everybody who had the will. Possibly there were doctors in the world who believed that where the spirit was willing a man in a Y. M. C. A. uniform was an asset to the American army in France even if the flesh was weak. So I stood at attention on the deck of the liner while the passing band played our national anthem and the *Espagne* steamed out to sea.

A cold wind was sweeping up the river, but most of the *Espagne's* passengers remained on deck, loath to seek the four walls of staterooms while their eyes might be banqueted with the sight of American shores, even though the vision was principally of dingy and irregular piles of masonry and stone that, viewed from New York's streets, constitute the architectural marvels of a progressive nation, but which, seen from the sea, are unsightly jumbles wreathed and festooned with smoke and haze that on this December afternoon were flecked by snow flurries.

Just as the wintry dusk was falling we passed the Statue of Liberty, presented to the people of our country by the people of France. The uplifted hand seemed waving a good-bye to us as we passed out to sea, and I wondered what was in store for me between this good-bye and the wonderful day—if it ever came—when I should stand on the deck of another ship and interpret that uplifted hand as a greeting for my safe return.

The shores of my native land faded from view as I stood on deck. The ship began to yield more and more to the roll of the open sea, in the deepening darkness I strained my eyes for the last glimpse of America, and on the wings of the whispering winds I sent my good-byes to wife, to the land of my birth, and to all that I held dear. The engines were thud-thud-thudding, the sea was " sw-s-s-s-h-ing " louder, four bells (six o'clock) sounded, and from some mysterious place a gong reverberated its call to dinner. I turned to answer its summons, but paused to cast another backward look. Then I walked to the front of the ship and stared out across the dark waters. From out

of the tossing sea a great Question Mark seemed to rise before me.

Slowly our ship threaded its way through the mine-fields that guarded New York. Presently our engines stopped, and I stood on deck in the darkness wondering why. Suddenly a dazzling wedge of light shot across the waves and in its glare I saw a rowboat bobbing about close to us, and a man was going down a rope ladder lowered over the side of our ship. We were "dropping" our pilot. In a moment the tiny boat was at the foot of the ladder, I saw the pilot leap into it and wave his hand. Instantly the searchlight flashed away from us, from out of the darkness where I had last seen the rowboat came a hoarse shout, our engines began to thud again, and we were on our way across the Atlantic. I went in to dinner.

At dinner the service was excellent and cuisine all that could be asked, but it was a French ship, with French officers, crew and servants, I knew no French, and the waiters knew no English. So I ordered my dinner by pointing to articles on the menu card, which was printed in both French and English, but

the success of this plan was marred by the fact that the *garçon* seemed unable to see straight when I pointed out my order on the card.

This condition of affairs continued throughout the voyage, and the waiter's ability to see straight did not improve any faster than my French. My lot was the common lot of all who spoke no French. After one had ordered by the sign language one waited with considerable curiosity to see just what was brought. There was no gayety in the dining-room and no music. The passengers assumed an air of cheerfulness, but most of the smiles were as set as a design on china-ware. Everybody pretended—but nobody was deceived.

We were running without lights of any kind visible on the outside. Not even a cigarette's glow was permitted on deck. Thud-thud-thud went the engines, the voice of the sea became louder, the darkness deepened as the stars hid behind heavy cloudbanks, and yielding more and more to the Atlantic's heaving roll our ship moved like a phantom through the black night that brooded over the waters.

Not even the glow of New York's waste of

light now showed on the western horizon, and I gave up my lonely after dinner vigil on deck and went inside. The passageways of the ship were dimly illuminated with carefully shaded lights, and all portholes were tightly shut and covered with heavy disks as an added precaution against the escape of a ray of light.

In the smoking-room men were talking in subdued tones, smoking much but drinking little. No hilarity of any kind here. In the *salon* a little company of passengers was making a brave attempt at jollity, led by two Y. M. C. A. workers, one a young woman canteen-worker who was at the piano playing accompaniments for one of the men secretaries who stood at her side singing and striving to inject cheer into the group. But it was futile. The parting from loved ones was too recent, the perils of the submarine-infested sea too new and real.

"Over there! Over there!
Send the word, send the word over there,
That we'll be over, we're coming over—
And we won't come back till it's over over there!"

The splendid baritone voice rolled the words

out with a snap that for a moment roused the listeners from their lethargy, and a little burst of applause greeted him. Ah, little did he know that the Angel of Fate had written his name as one who would not come back even when it was over over there. Gallant and fearless, strong and full of the joy of life he was when last I saw him near the flaming battle lines of the Luneville sector. Not long afterward he fell, killed by a shell, while serving his country in the only way circumstances had privileged him to serve.

The days passed rather wearily. The chap who invented the phrase about "keeping on, keeping on" must have thought of it while on board ship, listening to the everlasting thud of the engines and dismally reflecting that for days the roll and pitch of the vessel would be unceasing.

Many were missing from the dining-room the first morning because of seasickness, but beyond a slight headache that remained with me much of the voyage I was fit. The *Espagne* was armed with a rapid-fire three-inch gun forward and two six-inch guns at the

rear, all manned by French naval gunners. Shells were piled beside the guns, and every minute the sea was being closely scanned for submarines.

We had sailed without any convoy, the rumor being that a destroyer or some other type of fighting vessel would meet us soon after we put to sea and guard us on our voyage. About noon on the second day we sighted a ship, miles away, low down on the horizon, and the Society for the Spread of Groundless Rumors immediately announced that the stranger was "part of our convoy." A little study, however, proved beyond question that the ship was sailing westward, which effectually did away with the convoy story.

Let it here be recorded that the greatest abiding-place of rumors known to man is the deck of a ship a thousand miles out at sea. The rumors begin as soon as the vessel leaves its pier, and the farther out to sea it gets the more numerous they become. It is the only place in the world that beats an army camp for rumors.

The convoy rumor was the first to seize the

Espagne in its grip, and it lived all the way across the Atlantic until the day—and a truly glad day it was for all of us—when a little wasp of the sea did come dashing out to fight for us against a German submarine that was creating havoc not many leagues away. No one admitted nervousness, but every one was frankly interested in the question of whether or not we were to have any protection other than our own guns.

This universal interest caused the convoy rumor to assume many—and sometimes laughable and absurd—forms. I remember well of a dear old lady who was extremely nervous because of the submarine peril, but who came to me late in the afternoon of the second day, her face wreathed in one of the most genuine smiles I saw on any face during the entire voyage.

"I feel so much better now that I have found out about our convoy," she said, happily.

"Our convoy?" I asked, in uncertainty. "Well, just what have you found out about it?"

"Oh," she replied, with a joy note in her voice, "it is keeping out of sight, just below

the horizon, but following us all the time, keeping in touch by wireless and ready to rush up and sink any submarines that attack us."

"Um-m-m—isn't that great!" I exclaimed with feigned enthusiasm that found a sincere response in her soul.

Absurd? Certainly. But why destroy her peace of mind by proving the absurdity? Throughout the rest of the voyage she was calm and content in her belief that our valiant guardians were watching over us—out of sight, just below the horizon.

Again night came upon the sea, again the portholes and windows were carefully blinded, and once more we were in a world of faint light and feigned cheerfulness. Still our thoughts were behind us. We were remembering that back there were our loved ones; we knew that back there the lights were gleaming brightly, and we turned from thoughts of that blessed land of light only to think ahead into the unknown future in an effort to picture the wonderful day when we would be sailing in the other direction, straining our eyes for the first glimpse of the God-loved land of the Stars and

Stripes. And so we harked to the thud-thud-thud of the engines that were driving us farther and farther away from home through a starless night and across a peril-infested sea.

Sunday morning dawned in storm and blinding clouds of rain and spray wind-driven until tiny streams found their way through the door crevices and ran down the companionways. When I opened my eyes I found the ship plunging and rolling terrifically, and also discovered that the stateroom was oppressively warm. When I sat up in my berth the perspiration started very easily, and when I dressed and started toward the dining-room I became aware that life was not all joy. Making my way to the promenade deck, I found that the sea was running mountains high, the atmosphere was muggy, and here and there, clinging to the guard-ropes were groups of distressed-looking passengers, viewing the angry ocean. The night before it had been quite cold. Now it was like summer, the change being due to the fact that we had entered the Gulf Stream during the night.

All day long the storm raged, and but few

appeared in the dining-room. And so the day passed, with the ship plunging and rolling and creaking. Night came down early, and the wind died away, but the sea still ran high. A few tried to spend the evening as usual in the *salon,* but by eight o'clock the smoking-room and *salon* were deserted and only the state-rooms knew the hum of voices—and occasionally the mournful sighs of the victims of seasickness.

Sleep was just winning me from the consciousness of all this when I heard the ship's whistle. Raising on one elbow, I listened. Yes, there it was again, low, sonorous, long-drawn.

"Oo-oo-o-oo-oo!" "Oo-oo-o-oo-oo!" it sounded over and over again, ominously. Then another portentous fact forced itself upon me.

Our engines had stopped.

CHAPTER II

IN THE SUBMARINE ZONE

WITHOUT doubt our engines had stopped. No longer could we hear that monotonous thud-thud-thud that had been with us without cessation since we left New York.

"Oo-oo-o-oo-oo!" "Oo-oo-o-oo-oo!" moaned the whistle, and with engines stopped we lay pitching and rolling in the trough of the heavy sea—the most unpleasant sensation possible to be experienced on an ocean voyage.

Dressing hurriedly and going on deck I found our ship hove to in a world of dense fog, through which a heavy downpour of rain was coming. The whistle was sounding a warning for other ships that might come slipping through the ghostly gray that defied visual penetration to a distance of ten feet. At regular intervals the doleful fog-signals

boomed out over the waters, and our engines had been stopped as an extra precaution.

Groping my way back to the doorway I left the deck, and in the smoking-room found one of the ship's officers who could speak a little English. He told me that the rain would beat down the waves and that we would have a calmer sea on the morrow. It was good, he said, that the rain should fall. But when I asked as to the danger of a collision in the fog he shrugged his shoulders in the French way—which is *not* the shrug as portrayed on the American stage—and as the whistle sounded he pointed in its direction and again shrugged his shoulders, as if to say, " You hear our warning. It is all we can do."

Presently the fog began to lift and our engines started. I returned to bed, and was dropping off to sleep once more when the whistle resumed its moaning, and a moment later the engines stopped. The fog had come down again. Heavy fogs are not delightful incidents of a sea voyage. The record of maritime disasters is thickly sprinkled with collisions due to fogs. But, rocked in the

cradle of the deep, with the dolorous " Oo-oo-o-oo-oo-ing " of the fog-signal for my lullaby, I sank to sleep, and when I awoke it was morning, with the sea much calmer, but no signs of sunshine.

All that day we ran through a gray mist—part of the time rain—and fog. I stood on deck as night came down once more and looked away across a dreary waste of rolling ocean, with spray dashing high and the waters turning black with the deepening dusk, drenching rain, fog banks and lowering clouds. Then came night, and at nine o'clock the Y. M. C. A. company and a few others assembled in the Children's Room and had a prayer service. It was impressive, and there were tears in most eyes when the leader prayed for the safety and comfort and happiness of our loved ones at home.

During the prayer service the engines again stopped and the fog-signal moaned time after time. But finally the wind came up and in a measure dispelled the fog, so that when I went out on deck the *Espagne* was again plunging ahead in utter darkness, while the sea roared

and swirled and raced past our vessel with a queer sucking sound. We were a little more than a thousand miles from New York.

All the next day it was the same story. Morning came with the familiar dull sky, the unpleasant lurch and creak of the ship in heavy seas. During the day the skies cleared for a time and the passengers promenaded the decks enjoying the respite from storm. No one knew the course we were sailing—that was one of the war-time secrets—but we had either swung far south or else were in the Gulf Stream, for the temperature was very moderate and wraps were laid aside.

I was standing with my back to the rail talking to an army officer when I saw a strange look suddenly come into his eyes; he threw his arm in front of his face and crouched, at the same time shouting, "Look out!" But before I could make a move of any kind a great wave swept over the promenade deck, rolling almost as high as the bridge, and descended upon all who had not seen it and scurried to shelter. It was a genuine surprise-deluge—a freak of the sea—for even the flying spray had not been

reaching the promenade deck for the last several hours. And not another wave came near the deck during the remainder of the day. But that one drenched me from the top of my head to my toes, necessitating a complete change of clothing.

We were beginning to wonder at the (seemingly, at least) lack of precautionary measures, such as boat-drills, etc. Up to the present there had been no suggestions that we should keep our life-belts near us, nor had there been any bulletins issued regarding boat-drills. In each stateroom printed instructions in both French and English told the numbers of the lifeboats to which the occupants of the different berths were assigned and also informed us that in case it became necessary to abandon ship the women and children would enter the boats from the promenade deck; the men would wait until the boats were lowered to the water and would then go down the ladders to them. But up to the present there had been no boat-drills.

The printed instructions in the staterooms also said: " In case of accident, the whistle and bell will give the alarm." And when the fog

came on the whistle roared continually, and throughout each day and night there was a constant jangle of bells of one kind or another—dinner-gongs, ship's bell striking the hour, call bells, etc.—so that the nervous ones found their hours filled with alarms.

It was the fifth day when we found a notice posted calling for boat-drill at three in the afternoon. To most of us it was a welcome call, for we were nearing what was officially designated "the danger zone." At 2:45 that afternoon one of the stewards went up and down the corridors energetically ringing a large hand-bell, a bell that brought me memories of my boyhood days back in Indiana when milkmen used to announce their call by ringing just such bells.

The ringing of the bell was the signal, and pursuant to instructions in the notice we scurried to our staterooms and reappeared wearing our life-belts, while a few "aristocrats" waddled out on deck garbed in the inflated and alleged non-sinkable suits that were being so persistently advertised by the New York stores at that period. Dressed in those

affairs they reminded one of the so-called comic pictures of " Billy Bounce." One of the most striking comments I can make on the abnormal condition of mind of folks who sailed the seas in those days is that no one seemed to see anything ludicrous in the appearance of these people as they toddled up the companionways to the boat deck, where we had been instructed to assemble.

Some one of the ship's officers who could speak fair English shouted to us to gather in groups by the boats to which we had been assigned. We did so, after which the officer came to each group, called the roll of that company, and then told us to descend to the promenade deck, where further instructions would be given. We were told that the numbers of our boats would be found painted in red above the spots where the different boats were to be lowered. We finally found the numbers. Then the officer came along and informed us that in case of disaster we were to assemble on these spots, the boats would be lowered until the women and children could board them there, and later the men were to go down the

ladders to the boats after they had been lowered to the water, just as the printed instructions in our rooms had stated.

That was the extent of our "boat-drill." Most of us were very careful mentally to mark the proper post, and then we investigated and located the shortest and best route to that spot from our staterooms.

When night came again it found the promenade deck a fairly popular sleeping-place, for many preferred to wrap up in rugs and blankets and spend the night fully dressed in deck-chairs near their boat station rather than to risk disaster finding them in their staterooms far from the lifeboats. That evening the souvenir cabin passenger list was issued. It showed a total of 376 passengers on board, of whom 187 were first-cabin, 128 second-cabin, and sixty-one steerage.

By this time most of the passengers had recovered from their seasickness, had grown accustomed to ship conditions, and had decided that as long as they were compelled to live for some days in a little world of their own they had as well make the best of it. So now in the

evenings we were having entertainments of various kinds in the *salon.* We had lectures, music, moving pictures, readings, and "stunts." Then we would pace the dark decks for an airing before seeking our staterooms, and occasionally we would pause to lean over the rail and watch the phosphorescent display in the waters beside the speeding ship. In the foam caused by the passing of the vessel the phosphorus would flash as if myriads of tiny lanterns were being darted here and there beneath the waves. At times the water seemed to be fairly blazing.

All things must end, and so there came a time when we could say, "To-morrow our voyage will end." That night was the eighth one we spent on the *Espagne,* and it was *the* night of our voyage, for now we were in the very heart of the danger zone, imperiled by submarines and mines. Monotonously we thud-thud-thudded along—and every soul on board realized that at any minute we might be blown out of the water. And yet, what did we do? Oh, sing, laugh, crack jokes, write letters—and show a deep affection for the ugly cork life-

belts that most of us now carried with us wherever we went.

A large number of the passengers spent this night on deck, curled up near the boats, with life-belts near their sides. Perhaps some had them on. Who could tell, out in that brooding darkness? In the afternoon people who carried life-belts around with them had been made the targets for a bit of chaffing—some kindly and much of it unkindly—on the part of those who affected a bravado that was senseless. But by evening this spirit had died away, and there was no longer a sneer for any one who carried a life-belt.

All day we had been running with all boats swung out over the sides, ready for instant launching. The rope ladders had been let down, and by each ladder there was a cluster of electric lights with a reflector to throw the light on the ladder and boat—if the power plant were not demolished by the explosion, which was not unlikely if we were torpedoed or struck a mine.

Our old friend, the Convoy Rumor (by this time it had grown old enough to be capitalized),

again visited us this afternoon when we sighted a three-masted ship some miles away on our right (or should I be nautical in my descriptions and say "starboard beam"?) and ahead of that ship we could discern another vessel of some sort, riding low in the water. Immediately the Society for the Spread of Groundless Rumors was on the job, and in a few minutes we were served with everything from a decoy ship and submarine to "Our Convoy."

The *Espagne* quickly fluttered a ropeful of flag signals, but if the strangers paid any attention to them, those of us who had glasses were not able to discover the fact. Neither do I know what our signals meant. Finally the two ships disappeared below the horizon—headed westward. The convoy myth had perished once more. My glasses plainly showed me that the low-riding vessel was a torpedo-boat destroyer—but beyond that fact I know nothing.

When night came I pondered on the question of whether I should remain in my stateroom or sleep on deck. For the last two nights I had slept in my berth with my clothes on, ready

for any emergency. There were those who scoffed—yes, just as there are those who persist in lighting fires with gasoline and sneer at whosoever urges prudence. To my mind it seemed to have become a question of some (myself included) sleeping—really sleeping—with their clothes on and others scoffing in their bravado and then undressing and spending the nights in sleeplessness. And after I had analyzed the problem I decided to spend this critical night out on deck.

Need I say that it was one of the strangest nights I ever experienced? Wrapped in my overcoat and blankets, I stretched out in a deck-chair close to the boat to which I was assigned, and with my life-belt across my knees I was as nearly ready for an emergency as it was possible to be. The decks were in total darkness, heavy clouds were hanging over us, and always there were the steady thudding of the engines and the swishing roar of the sea. And always one knew that at any instant a torpedo or a mine might blow up the ship.

Those of us who chose the deck for our sleeping-quarters that night had plenty of company.

Nearly all the chairs were occupied. People groped their way about the dark deck, joked with friends as they fell over deck-chairs or friendly feet or snarled at strangers who growled when their chair was jostled or their toes trodden upon. But for the most part people were cheerful and forbearing—and under a strain. No doubt of it. The fact was evidenced by the jerky voices, the nervous giggles, the explosive oaths, and the fact that occasionally some one would unwrap himself from rugs and blankets and go to the rail and stand peering out over the dark sea. And all night long there were sleepless passengers who paced the deck, back and forth, back and forth, or around and around the ship.

Sleep came to me that night more generously than I had anticipated. Occasionally I awoke for brief periods, listened to the "sw-s-s-s-h" of the sea, the subdued conversation of sleepless ones, the thud of the engines, and then sleep would come again.

Toward morning I became aware that it had turned suddenly colder, and by the peculiar lurching of the ship I knew that we were zig-

zagging sharply and frequently. I was awake again in time to lie cuddled up in my chair and watch the dawn come over the sea. It came drab and dismal, and soon after the first gray light began to make objects discernible most of the passengers were on deck, scanning the sea anxiously. We were then zigzagging our way up the Bay of Biscay, having swung south and come up along the coast of Portugal and Spain.

Soon after breakfast our wireless brought us the news that a British freighter had been torpedoed at dawn by a German submarine, the attack taking place about fifty miles from our present location. An hour later we were passing through waters thickly strewn with bits of wreckage, evidently from the ill-fated freighter.

A little before ten o'clock on the morning of this eventful day a smudge of smoke appeared on the horizon ahead of us, and a few minutes later our ship sent aloft a number of signal-flags and broke out the French tricolor at the stern.

The news spread almost instantly in some mysterious manner to all parts of the ship, and immediately every passenger was crowding

forward to observe the coming of the stranger. Suddenly a spar of the floating wreckage shot up out of the sea not far from the *Espagne,* a spar so like a periscope that a woman screamed.

And then we divided our attention between the unknown vessel ahead of us and the wreckage, sinister in its silent warning, all about us.

CHAPTER III

OUR CONVOY—AND THE SHORES OF FRANCE

THAT the newcomer was speedy was soon demonstrated, for it quickly rose above the horizon and bore down upon us rapidly. Larger and larger it grew until our glasses told us that it was a destroyer, coming at full speed.

In what seemed an incredibly short space of time the vessel swept past us and a mighty shout went up from our decks when we saw the newcomer run up the flag of France. Our convoy had come at last.

It was a French destroyer that had come racing to meet and guard us during the remainder of our voyage, one of the speediest wasps of the sea, mounting guns that seemed amazingly large and heavy for so small a craft. Immediately after the destroyer had passed us she suddenly came about and followed us at a distance of about a quarter of a mile, our

glasses showing us that her men were at the guns ready for instant action.

The decks of the *Espagne* became a new world. The happy laughter of women—laughter long stifled by anxiety—rang gayly, and the voices of the men carried a new ring of joyousness. The destroyer swung back and forth across our wake, occasionally speeding up opposite us on one side or the other and then dropping back again, and as I stood and watched it and then noted the floating wreckage of the English freighter, the French flag flying from the stern of the guardian vessel took on added beauty in my eyes.

Steadily we zigzagged our way forward. The waters of the Bay of Biscay are peculiarly striking in their opalescent coloring, and numerous sudden squalls and rainstorms during the day lashed them into scenes of tumultuous beauty, sent the *Espagne* and our doughty little convoy reeling and plunging, and moistened our decks with clouds of spray that the occasional bursts of sunshine painted with the hues of the rainbow.

At 10:45 we assembled in the grand *salon*

for church services conducted by a minister in our Y. M. C. A. party. The minister was standing with his back to the front of the boat, and from where I sat I could look directly past him through the front windows of the *salon* and see the crew on duty beside the three-inch gun. The minister had commenced the reading of the Scripture lesson when I saw the gunners suddenly spring to position and begin swinging the muzzle of the piece toward a new direction. At the same time the non-commissioned officer in charge turned and shouted something to the officers on the bridge, and pointed in the direction in which the gun was now being aimed.

It was a tense moment. Others sitting beside me saw the incident. But none of us wished to disturb the service that was proceeding so calmly under the leadership of the minister who knew nothing of what was transpiring out on the gun deck. So we sat with clenched hands and waited for the flash of the gun that would signal the opening of the fight which seemed to be only a moment in the future.

But the shot was not fired. The gunners crouched beside their piece ready at the wink of an eye to launch a shell, and presently we who were witnesses of the affair saw our guardian go racing past us toward the spot on which our gun was trained. Several minutes later the destroyer, having, like a faithful hunting-dog, nosed out the suspicious jumble of wreckage that had caused the alarm, again dropped to the rear, our gun-crew once more assumed their positions of watchfulness—and I know one man who for about the first time during the entire service, thus far, heard the words the minister was speaking. I shall never forget the verse of the psalm he was reading:

"In God have I put my trust. I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

It was 3:30 in the afternoon when I saw a sailor standing well forward raise his glasses and gaze steadily ahead and slightly to the left—over the port bow, to use the nautical description. Something in his manner convinced me that it was a matter of prime interest that was engaging his attention, so I leveled my glasses in the same direction and saw—

FRANCE!

I asked him if I were not right. He was French, but understood my question and nodded and smiled. "*Oui, oui—France!*" he replied happily.

Once more I looked. Yes, there was France—merely a penciled line rising out of the mists of the sea, but France, nevertheless, and the glasses also revealed another vessel headed toward us. Again the news spread quickly, and again the few phlegmatic ones who had preferred their staterooms to the kaleidoscopic beauties of the Bay of Biscay came hurrying to the promenade deck.

Land—after nine days of rolling sea! A squall had been sweeping about us, but now it had passed and the clouds were growing lighter. Ten happy minutes passed, and then the *Espagne* ran a bundle of bunting to the top of the forward mast, and at the pull of a string the Glory Flag—the Stars and Stripes—leaped out to the breeze. To add to the effectiveness of the picture—(though the telling of it may smack of the photo-play screen)—just as the dear old flag streamed out from the halyard the

sun broke through the clouds and bathed it in a warm caress.

Instantly as the flag was caught by the breeze the passengers cheered with great, ringing shouts of joy and pride and thankfulness, the French and passengers of other nationalities joining in the cheers and salutes. I am not ashamed to tell that there was a rush of tears to my eyes as I stood on the deck that afternoon and saw the wonderful flag of a wonderful land—my native land—fluttering above me. Just ahead was the land I hoped to have an humble part in freeing from a brutal invasion—and above me was the flag of the land of my birth.

That afternoon in the Bay of Biscay I suddenly came to realize that I loved this homeland of mine more devotedly than I had ever dreamed of before I had gone adventuring across the sea.

So far as the *Espagne* was concerned, there was no sentiment connected with the flying of the Stars and Stripes. It was simply a matter of routine business, the usual signal indicating that our ship had sailed from an Amer-

ican port. Now that we were approaching another port, the rules demanded that this signal be hoisted. But with Old Glory floating above us at the foremast and the French tricolor streaming from the stern halyard we were all very happy.

Presently we found that the vessel headed toward us was the pilot-boat, bearing the man who was to guide us into the harbor and up the river to Bordeaux. Then the *Espagne* hove to and lay awaiting his coming. We were now safely within the submarine nets that guarded the approach to the Gironde River, and our gunners began packing up the shells and covering their guns with tarpaulins. The destroyer ran on past us and also came to anchor. We were no longer in need of protection.

The pilot, putting off in a rowboat from his vessel, caught the rope ladder we dropped over the side and came clambering up to the *Espagne's* deck. Soon he was on the bridge and once more we steamed ahead. Before us the breakers were dashing against a green coast—a coast of wondrous beauty, it seemed to us. In a short time we were close enough to

shore so that we could see the pretty villas on the hillsides.

France was before us. Close at hand was land—but over me suddenly swept the realization that it was not *my* land. However, it was the land of friends, and although a great loneliness came over me at the thought that the sea now separated me from my loved ones, a chastened joy was in my heart as we slowly steamed into the mouth of the river and finally came to anchor opposite the little town of Royan. Here we were to wait until an early morning hour when the tide would permit us to proceed up the river to Bordeaux.

Dusk came on, and then a wonderful thing happened. The electric deck-lights were switched on, for the first time since we left New York. As we strolled around the lighted decks happiness was everywhere, and through the open portholes—another wonder—came the sound of laughter and merriment in the staterooms. In those hours the *Espagne* was the abiding-place of light hearts.

Presently the police-boat came alongside, bearing the harbor police and customs officials,

and then bedlam, pandemonium, chaos, babel—and everything else one can think of along those lines—broke loose. With the police and customs officers were a large number of porters to handle the baggage, and for some reason they had a hard time getting their boat into the desired position beside the ship. They would start to raise their gangplank to our deck and then would pull it back, amid a perfect pandemonium of shouts and orders and a wilderness of gesticulations. One instant all of the porters would be rushed to one end of the patrol-boat, and the next instant they would be wildly herded to another spot; they would shove the gangplank forward and then pull it back; they would raise it amid a babel of shouts and then lower it with a bedlam of exclamations.

Leaning over the railing of the promenade deck of the *Espagne,* I looked down on the turbulent scene and a great wonder began to arise in my mind as to how I would ever get along in this strange land.

The gong sounded and we went to dinner and while we ate the patrol-boat got its affairs straightened out and the officers and porters

swarmed aboard. And then we found that we had a strenuous evening ahead of us.

First the police and customs officials must dine, and this they did with the deliberation characteristic of the French, to whom every meal is a ceremony. After they had finished the officials proceeded with their respective duties. In the grand *salon* the police established themselves with our passenger list, and as our names were called we were ushered before them and presented our passports and other credentials for their visé. After they had stamped and signed them they issued to each of us a "*Permis de circulation,*" a landing permit.

In the meantime the porters had things in an uproar all over the ship. Some were hoisting the baggage from the hold and trundling it along the port side of the promenade deck, where it was stacked in huge piles, while others were racing up and down the corridors at the beck and call of the customs officers who were visiting the staterooms and inspecting the cabin baggage. Trunks, suit-cases, traveling-bags—everything—had to be dragged out from

under berths and opened for examination, after which all stateroom baggage except that we were to carry was to be taken to the starboard side of the promenade deck for checking to Paris, or wherever our designation might be.

On this—the starboard—side of the promenade deck a desk had been set up for the selling of railroad tickets and the checking of the baggage, which first was to be weighed on a small set of scales similar to those found in any country grocery-store in America. These scales had been dragged out on deck and put in position about twenty feet from the ticket-desk.

Down in the corridors and staterooms customs officials argued and jabbered (at least it sounded like jabbering to those of us who spoke no French, just as, I doubt not, our helpless questionings and arguments sounded like jabberings to them); room-stewards, stewardesses, porters, officials, and passengers hurried up and down the corridors shouting questions and pleas—usually unintelligible to the ones addressed; porters with trunks on their shoulders or suit-cases in hands bumped into everybody else to the accompaniment of French im-

precations, shouts of warning, and plain, unadorned American swear-words—all with a vocal setting of a babel of English, French, Italian, and Spanish, a babel whose volume rose and fell much as had the waves of the sea we had just crossed.

Everybody American, of course, was in a desperate hurry to have his wants attended to immediately. During my service abroad—in France, in England, in Scotland, in Ireland—I discovered that by this trait one might always know an American. Despite the fact that a perfect swarm of porters had come to us on the patrol-boat they were all too few in number to meet the desires of the Americans who wanted their trunks removed to the weighing-station on the promenade deck the instant the customs official had put his cabalistic mark on the pieces. As a result, porter-hunting became popular—or perhaps I should say universal, rather than popular—and a little later, after the supply had been gobbled up by the early hunters, porter-*stealing* became a fine art.

One, perhaps, had succeeded in getting a porter to one's stateroom and was engaged in

issuing directions by means of many gesticulations with hands and feet as to which pieces were to be carried to the deck, when—presto! The porter-stealer got in his fine work and the first passenger was left standing in the midst of a confusion of trunks and bags while the porter, yielding to a large tip thrust into his hand by the "stealer," darted out of the room and followed the highest bidder down the corridor. Nor was it unknown that now and then some stalwart American, hopeless of making himself understood in any other way, would boldly reach into a stateroom, seize the porter by the arm and drag him to his own stateroom by main strength, the porter shrieking "*Un minute! Un minute! Un minute!*" ("One minute!")

Twice did my roommates and I get porters to our room, and twice did we lose them through kidnapping or other cause, so at last we decided that the three of us ought to be able to shift for ourselves and carry our own stuff to the deck. This we did.

But when it came to getting our baggage weighed we found a little the worst confusion

we had yet encountered. In all sincerity I affirm that I have learned profoundly to admire the French people—but just as sincerely I affirm that their "system" for the baggage-weighing—on that voyage, at least—was chaos. The small scales referred to were placed about the middle of the starboard promenade deck, and toward and around these scales hundreds of passengers surged from all directions—men and women dragging trunks and laden like longshoremen with baggage of all sorts—and all struggling desperately to get to the scales. Some there were who had subdued the frantic porters with extra large tips, and as a result the clamoring crowd was dotted with these fellows pushing small trucks piled high with baggage, the porters shrieking at the scales man with voices that rose high above the other uproar.

Women with hats on one ear, perspiration streaming down their faces, and hair sadly disheveled, struggled the same as men, some near to tears and others bitterly scornful. Be it said to the credit of our country that most American men did their best to ameliorate the lot of these unhappy women—but most men

were encumbered with two or more pieces of baggage and had slight opportunity for being of real service to any one in distress, even though their souls may have been filled with chivalry.

And reaching the scales was no sure sign that one's troubles were ended. Just as "porter-stealing" had been indulged in down in the staterooms, so now was "scales-stealing" practiced, and in much the same way. If one had succeeded in getting his baggage piled on the scales it was not uncommon for it to be dumped off without weighing by the scales man who had been bought by a larger tip from some one who thus succeeded in having his stuff weighed ahead of his turn—although the question of one's "turn" was always rather hazy. Occasionally one's baggage would be displaced by the same "strong-arm" methods used below. That is, some double-fisted chap would deliberately crowd forward and dump from the scales that which had been piled on them by a smaller fellow, the husky one immediately putting his own stuff on to be weighed.

In truth, as I witnessed one or two cases of

this law of the claw and fang, of the triumph of brute force over physical weakness, I found myself wondering what might have been the result had the strong and the weak found themselves occupying an overloaded lifeboat or raft on the open sea.

Fights? No. One was too crowded to fight—and, besides, while one was endeavoring to black the other fellow's eyes, and possibly having his own nose broken, one might with the same expenditure of energy succeed in having his baggage weighed. To fight—even to win a fight—was nothing! To see the scales-arm and weights balancing one's baggage—ah, that were joy!

Occasionally some one with a sense of humor would shout a jest that smoothed out many of the discomforts of the struggle, and now and then a Y. M. C. A. secretary would pipe up from the midst of the mass and sing a verse:

> "Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag
> And smile, smile, smile!"

I was thankful for a sense of humor that carried me in good spirits through that episode.

In due time I got my baggage weighed, the attendant shouted and clamored at the clerk at the ticket-desk some distance away, until an answering shout announced that the weight had been heard, I fought my way to the ticket-clerk, bought my ticket for Paris, paid the amount demanded for baggage excess, a destination slip was pasted on my baggage—and I staggered down to my stateroom, exhausted, but laughing at the absurdity of it all. And for hours after I had reached my room I could hear the trampling of feet and confusion of voices on the deck above me, where the " Battle for the Scales " was still being waged.

When I opened my eyes in the morning the *Espagne* was slowly making her way to the pier in Bordeaux. A hasty breakfast and we were out on deck in time to see the ship tie up.

At nine o'clock, in a drizzling rain, I made my way down the slippery gangplank. The voyage of the *Espagne* had ended.

I was standing on French soil.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE FRENCH REGARDED THE YANKS

WATCHING immigrants huddled in groups in New York or Chicago stations, staring with wondering eyes at the seeming confusion of the new world, I have many times laughed at them and perhaps have said some thoughtless things about them as they stood bewildered by the strangeness of the language and scenes and customs with which they were surrounded. But never again will I do so.

I made this vow as I stood there, on the pier at Bordeaux, France, that rainy December morning. I was in a strange land, everything about me was strange, the language I heard was not my language, and seemingly everything was confusion. Our little group of Y. M. C. A. folks huddled together much as I had seen the immigrants do in America, and my thoughts flashed to those scenes of the past.

Of course, a waterfront is never a cheerful, inviting spot at any time, and that one seemed less so than any other I had ever visited. The river was veiled with mist and the rain fell steadily. We knew not where to seek shelter—and so amid these depressing surroundings we looked about us with wondering eyes, gazed upon a world new to us, and waited for the secretary who was supposed to meet the ship.

At last he came and we were sent across the city in busses to the station where we were to take the train for Paris. After reaching the railway station I renewed my vow of never again laughing in an unkind way at foreigners, for the exhibition we gave that morning would have drawn a great crowd of jeering, hooting people had the scene been Chicago instead of Bordeaux and the participants travelers from a country other than America.

As our train would not leave for about two hours we were disposed to have a bit of look at the city. Some of us desired to send cablegrams. Result: We obstructed the sidewalks, we wrangled, we argued, we talked loudly, we pointed, we stood in the middle of the street

and consulted maps while we continued to wrangle, irrespective of the fact that we were blocking traffic and making nuisances of ourselves in general. And I beg permission to say to you that our group was composed for the most part of men and women of affairs and proven intelligence, some of them having won distinction in our America. I submit that we were not a rabble.

Some have gone to France and written with bitter sarcasm of the country, the people, and their customs. Thus early in this volume I plead for fairness and analysis instead of prejudice and hasty conclusions, and I relate the above facts in the hope that they may serve as another application of the old parable of the beam and the mote. Mayhap there will be other pages whereon will be recorded instances that point the same moral.

Our journey from Bordeaux to Paris required ten hours of fast traveling. To those who had never been abroad, the French train itself was a matter of interest, from the small locomotive devoid of pilot or bell to the coaches, consisting of a number of compartments, each

seating eight—four facing four. A door opens from the compartments into an aisle running along one side of the coach, the aisle leading to the doors at either end of the coach. In this aisle are seats that fold up against the side of the car when not in use, but which are there for the convenience of those unable to obtain seats in the compartments. This description refers only to first-class and second-class cars. The third-class cars consist of compartments extending clear across, with no side-aisle, and with doors opening on either side of the compartments, by means of which the passengers enter or leave the cars. Thus if you are a passenger on a third-class car you are unable to leave your compartment between stations, for they are not connected by any doors. The first and second-class cars have the toilet conveniences usual to American cars, but those who travel third-class have a cheerless, isolated journey.

Speaking of railroads, I pause to express my uncertainty as to whether there is a locomotive in France that has a whistle other than the peculiarly shrill ones that caused the Yanks

over there rather contemptuously to dub them "peanut whistles." I never heard any other while I was there, although one evening months after I had landed I walked a mile just for the privilege of seeing an American locomotive and in the hope that I would hear it emit a good old American bellow. I saw the American locomotive, but the pesky thing did not whistle.

Between Bordeaux and Paris our train carried a very good diner, with young women waiters. An excellent *table d'hote* dinner was served for six francs (about $1.15 at the rate of exchange then prevailing). It was very difficult to convince the attendants that we did not wish wine. In fact, all during my stay in France I found café, hotel, and dining-car attendants mystified if I declined wine.

We traveled through a beautiful country, and it was not until late afternoon that the fresh, green fields began giving way to a landscape bearing hints of winter. Before dark we found ourselves surrounded by snow, and when we reached Paris at nine that night the city was enveloped in a dismal, chilling fog.

After reaching my hotel on the Rue de

Rivoli I decided in spite of my weariness to have a little peep at Paris before retiring. Going out upon the street, I found only a few street-lamps burning here and there beside the walks, blue glass being used in the lamps, so that only a dim light would show.

The question is frequently asked me: "What were your first impressions of Paris?" My answer is that the outstanding features of Paris that most impressed me were the darkness of the city at night and the universal atmosphere of mourning. That first night I was astounded at the lack of light, and on succeeding nights as I made my way about the city and studied the situation this impression became deeper. Paris was virtually in darkness—a darkness that amazed me. It was only another illustration of how one could read innumerable times of the war in its various phases and yet be very greatly surprised when one came face to face with the very facts concerning which he had so often read. Over and over I had read that Paris was dark, through fear of air-raids, and yet when I walked the streets of the city and saw for myself the dark-

ened conditions I was at first surprised—and then I came to realize as never before how easy it is to skim a newspaper and how difficult it is to visualize the facts therein recorded.

Had the American people, reading in those shadowed days of a war from three to four thousand miles away from them, been able to visualize the facts as presented by the press, perhaps there would have been less adverse criticism regarding many things.

I had read that Paris was dark—but I had not truly realized that it was a fact. So, too, had I read that Paris had become a city of mourning—but I had not visualized the fact. Therefore, I was surprised when I walked the streets and found them dark, when I gazed upon the thronged streets and found the people sad. There was no gayety, no laughter—but everywhere soldiers of numerous nations, and women in mourning. One saw but few women who were not in mourning, and the show windows of the large stores were filled with exhibits of the sombre apparel. The French are given to the wearing of these symbols of grief more than are our American women, and as

there was scarcely a woman in Paris—or France, for that matter—who had not seen a loved one march away to the war never to return, the result was a striking—and depressing—display of these evidences of sorrow.

During my first days in Paris I was so struck by these facts that I took every opportunity for careful observation, and I found the conditions mentioned to be universal. The holidays were at hand and many soldiers of France were with their families or friends in Paris for a brief furlough, but in the little groups of men and women who passed along the streets there was no laughter and no evidence of any spirit of gayety. It was the same in the hotel parlors, in the dining-rooms, in the cafés—yes, and even in the theatres.

And in those early days of my stay over there I began to revise some preconceived notions of the French, a revision that continued the more I traveled over France and the closer I observed, studied and analyzed. I came back from over there a more ardent and devoted American than ever before, because beyond the sea I had seen my country tested in every

phase that contributes to the true greatness of a nation, and my patriotism had become more than a matter of tradition and academics. I had seen my country march into the fiery furnace, I had seen the soul of America in the agony of that ordeal as I had never seen it before, and I had knelt down before that wonderful soul with a worship second only to the adoration I gave to my God. But the more carefully I studied the French, the more I came to admire them, and, as in the case of the darkness of Paris and the atmosphere of mourning, I asked myself what had led to the erroneous notions.

I was finding the French to be a steadfast, calm, serious-minded people, heroic without ostentation. Of these characteristics I had frequently read, but the reading had not impressed me as deeply as had something else. What was it that had formed an opinion opposite to that which my reading should have given me? I searched my mental self for the answer, and finally—also reluctantly and with not a little humiliation—I came to believe that it was the " stage Frenchman " as portrayed in

our American theatres that had so grievously misled me. It was another case where visualization had conquered the printed word. As the French had suffered on our stage, so, too, have other races suffered—the Jew, the Italian, the Irishman, the Englishman, the Scot.

Of course I found defects in the characteristics of the French—judged from my viewpoint, just as they find many flaws in our American characteristics—judged from their viewpoint. For that matter, I am quite certain that they themselves will freely plead guilty to numerous imperfections, just as we Americans should be ready to confess to many flaws. The regret is that America has been soundly abused by many foreigners who spent but a few months in one or two sections of our country, with scant facilities for true analysis—just as there are those who have flayed France and the French, in spite of the fact that in too many instances the criticisms have been based on very superficial observation and scant study.

The fact is that during the winter of 1917–18 the American uniform was not popular in

Paris, and the Yank soldier was on probation all over France. And this, too, without fault on his part. It was a simple—and, I believe, not unnatural—question of viewpoint and visualization. May I explain, and in the explanation depict for you three distinct phases of French regard for the American soldier? And farther on I shall answer the question concerning the mental attitude of the soldiers of the Allies toward each other.

Those who were in France at the time know that for France the winter of 1917–18 was the "Valley Forge winter" of the war. Then it was that the gloom was the deepest, hope most forlorn, the shadow of defeat the heaviest. It was the fourth winter of the war. Can we who experienced but one winter of the struggle grasp what that means? And with the coming of the fourth winter the foe was seemingly nearer a complete victory than at any previous period of the war, not excepting the days of the first tremendous drive toward Paris, when the capture of that city would *not* have meant the ending of the war.

Russia had succumbed and was being ex-

ploited by the foe. A million French soldiers were in their graves, and the enemy, exultant over the collapse of Russia and the success of the intrigues, diplomacy, and plain treachery following her downfall, was being tremendously strengthened on the western front by troops withdrawn from the Russian front. Flushed with these triumphs, the morale of the foe was at its highest, so far as the French soldiers and French populace could learn, while, confronted by all of this and the certainty that a tremendous drive would sooner or later (probably at an early date, it was thought) be launched by the enemy, the morale of the Allied troops and populace was failing.

And there was the question of America. (Remember, now, that I am giving you the French view of the situation in the winter of 1917–18.) America had remained out of a war that France, England, and Italy (and countless thousands of Americans) considered our war as much as it was theirs, and while we remained out we had harvested untold millions from the warring countries. This fact had aroused resentment among the masses of the

people over there. Later there dawned a period when the thinking ones came to feel that—irrespective of the ethics of the position we had maintained before going in—it was fortunate that America had reserved her power until the crucial hour. But during the winter of 1917–18 there was no prophet to foretell to them how mighty was to be the blow America would soon strike.

Now as to the three phases of French regard for the American soldier:

After remaining out of the war for years, America had gone in, and France flamed with enthusiasm because of our decision. All the American newspapers had proclaimed that when Uncle Sam once put his hand to the plow he never turned back until he had accomplished what he set out to do. And there were even a few papers that vauntingly printed lurid stories of American prowess, all of which were reprinted in the Paris papers and were eagerly read by the masses of the people over there, who became dazzled by some of the intemperate articles to such an extent that they immediately began to look for this wonderful America to

perform some sort of a miracle—just what, they knew not—and crush the German and Austrian armies in a very brief time.

Then in July, 1917, the first American troops landed in France, and the land of Lafayette received them with wild demonstrations of joy. Nothing was good enough for *les soldats americaines.* Their pathways were strewn with flowers, and all possible honors were heaped upon them. Were not these khaki-clad warriors the vanguard of millions that the wonderful country across the sea was now to pour into the trenches? *Vive les soldats americaines! Vive la General Pershing! Vive*—everything American. Such was the French mind toward America and her soldiers when the first contingent landed.

Days of anxious waiting followed—eager watching for the flood of khaki that was to come from across the sea. But the flood gave no evidence of rolling toward France. Instead, but a slender stream of men and guns and bayonets trickled into suffering France, and again was it proven that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." The summer merged

into autumn, and autumn's days yielded to the rigors of winter, and still the tramp of the mighty American army was not heard in France. "Out there"—the indefinite term by which the front was designated—the miserable trenches of the long battle line knew nothing of American khaki, but, instead, were lined with the French horizon blue. True, a small detachment or two of American soldiers had been sent into the trenches in a quiet sector for a brief time, and then had been withdrawn. The holidays came on, and Paris was filled with American soldiers who spent their money freely, bought the best of everything, gave tremendous tips that the French *poilu* with his five-cents-a-day pay could not emulate, walked the streets with a characteristically-American independent swing, laughed much, and apparently refused to worry about the war.

Paris was well filled with French soldiers, too—but these sons of France were wearing service chevrons, wound stripes, and *croixs de guerre*. And France's millions were holding the trenches those sad winter days.

France looked at the rollicking American

money-spenders and then at her own soldiers—grim, hard-fighting, long-suffering, and still holding on while waiting for the promised aid from the wonderful America whose talkative ones had promised so much in such a short time. Then France sighed as she looked out to sea, looking in vain for the coming of the western legions.

And as the weeks passed with no signs of the situation improving, France began to cool toward the American uniform. Remember that I am speaking of the masses, not of the informed leaders, who were compelled to remain silent because of the importance of keeping the enemy in as much doubt as possible. France began to draw back from Americans and to treat them with ill-concealed aversion. France was heartsore and heartsick. Was America to fail her, after all the expectancy and high hopes that had been raised by her promises when she entered the war? After all, was America a nation of bluffers, as Germany had so often sneered?

So it was that slowly the pendulum of public regard for the American soldier swung

away from these clear-eyed, laughing stalwarts, who went their way unmindful of their declining prestige, joking about the war, and never loth to explain to any Frenchman the superiority of everything American.

The French masses had no conception of the tremendous problems that confronted America when she entered the war; they had not the faintest notion of how we had to begin with the very A B C's of preparing a nation to fight. Perhaps they had read—yes. But they had not visualized the facts, and, therefore, had not grasped them. What they did visualize and grasp were the conditions I have named above.

Winter dragged its dreary way along, and with the coming of earliest spring came anxious days, days when the long-looked-for German drive was in all minds. America was doing better now, and her soldiers were spreading over France, with some of them taking over so-called quiet sectors. But still France did not show signs of softening her judgment against the lads from the new world, while the Yanks were brimful of confidence as to what

would happen when America once got into her stride.

And in those days previous to the great drive, American soldiers began to express uncomplimentary opinions as to the fighting qualities of the French. Our troops upon taking over certain quiet sectors found, in some instances, that the French whom they had relieved had established a sort of "gentlemen's agreement" with the Germans, whereby neither side would fire on those who might expose themselves at odd times, such as when a few men might wish to go to a near-by stream to wash. Thus it frequently happened that French and German soldiers would boldly expose themselves while on some such errand as that, and on such occasions there was no shooting.

It was a lovely war, thus conducted, but it failed—utterly failed—to meet with the approval of the Yanks who relieved the French. They snorted with disgust when they heard of the arrangements—and as they had not entered into any such agreement they promptly and effectually shot up all German gentlemen who

exposed themselves. They sent word to the foe that it was not to be a pink tea, that they had come across the ocean for the express purpose of licking the Kaiser's army, and that they expected to accomplish this little job by killing as many Germans as possible at every opportunity.

"Fight, damn you, fight!" was the grim challenge they hurled across No Man's Land.

And when the French learned of this they were peeved more than ever with the boys from the western hemisphere. They saw in the American attitude nothing but foolishness due to lack of experience. Thus the breach widened.

March 21st came, and with it the great spring offensive on the part of Germany. I will not dwell just now on that period, but with that drive came the appeal of the Allies for America to strain every nerve in rushing men to France. America responded, General Pershing placed his army—now growing like magic—at the disposal of General Foch, and there came a day when the young huskies from America were rushed to the most critical point

of the battle line, where they met the onslaught of Germany's best, stopped them, and then rallying all of their powers they hurled themselves at the legions in gray and sent them staggering, broken and beaten back across the Marne.

A thrill touched every nook of France. America had kept the faith! America had come, and the laughing, rollicking, money-spending boys from over the sea—the youngsters who had joked about the war and who had gone into battle wearing flowers in their buttonholes—had performed incredible deeds of heroism; they had fought and died as they had lived, smiling! And they had saved France!

Swift as the flash of the telegraph's click that had carried the wondrous news throughout the land and around the world, the pendulum of French regard for the American soldier swung back to adulation, and throughout the weeks that followed when the soldiers of the Stars and Stripes drove steadily forward until the Hindenberg-Ludendorf war machine was smashed, the French lavished their love upon those whom we delight to call " Our Boys."

And, too, in the test of battle, the American soldier came to see that his French comrade was one of the best fighting men the world has ever known.

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING FRENCH MORALS

THE shrill, long-drawn wail of a fire-engine siren, a cry of "Air-raid! Lights out!" a hotel parlor transformed in a twinkling from light to darkness—and I was initiated into my first experience of hostilities on land, an attack on Paris by German airmen.

It was only a few nights after I had reached Paris, and while I was still awaiting my field assignment. Oddly enough, I may remark in passing, throughout my stay in France my visits to Paris were always made just at the time Fritz chose to put over an air-raid. The Germans never missed a single one of my brief stays in the city.

For more than a year Paris had not been threatened from the air, but this wonderful moonlight night soon after my arrival the fire-engines were sent speeding through the streets

shrieking a warning of the coming of Zeppelins or aëroplanes. We were gathered in the parlors of the Hotel Gibraltar, the official Y. M. C. A. hotel in Paris, listening to a lecture by one of our number when the more than twelve months of monotony broke down.

Immediately the lights went out—and so did we. Everybody groped in the sudden darkness for hat and coat and then hurried to the street. Then began the game of "Look Up," a game that became decidedly wearisome to us before we had earned our service insignia. But that night it was all new and sparkling with keenest interest for us. There was not a cloud in the sky and the moon was almost at the full. Here and there far away from us now we could hear the wails of the sirens as the fire-engines raced over the city. A moment or two after we had reached the street even the dim street lights had been extinguished, and Paris was as devoid of illumination as a village at midnight. Can you visualize New York or Chicago at night without a ray of artificial light showing?

A group of us decided to go to the Place de

la Concorde—one of the finest public squares in the world—where we would have an unobstructed view of events. As we hurried along the streets that were lighted only by the moon we met but few pedestrians, and they were hastening to places of refuge—unless they were Americans, in which case they were seeking some spot where they could see the " show " to advantage. We were all so new to the war in those days!

In the Place de la Concorde we found a small number of sight seekers, and among them were but few French. Remember, they had been in the war more than three years. All faces were turned upward in eager expectancy. We had not long to wait.

" There they come! " exclaimed a secretary who had been my roommate on the *Espagne*.

I looked where he was pointing, and, sure enough, high in the heavens a dim light—like a large star—was moving rapidly in our direction. This was my first experience, and rather queer sensations were mine as I stood staring at that Thing, sweeping so swiftly across the sky. My heart wasn't " in my throat," and my

knees didn't shake, as I had sometimes thought might be the case. I simply gazed, rather fascinated by the unusual sight, and wondered how long it would be before the first bomb would crash down. It was a bit odd, this thing of standing in the vast open space in the heart of a darkened, waiting city, watching for an enemy that was flying through the air to attack.

Onward swept the faint light in the sky, much as if a star had suddenly broken loose and was hurtling through space. It was somewhat uncanny to me who was entirely unaccustomed to seeing lights rushing across the heavens.

A group of French soldiers stood near me, staring upward. I touched one of them on the arm and pointed to the moving Thing. He looked and immediately replied, "*Francais*" ("French"). Perhaps I drew a little freer breath then than I had been enjoying. After all, even novelty cannot entirely disguise danger. The French soldier could speak a little English, just enough to give us the information that enemy machines or Zeppelins carried no lights, and that what we saw was a French scout-plane searching for the foe.

THE PLACE DE LA CONCORDE.

A favorite spot for those who wished to watch air raids. In the center is seen the Obelisk of Luxor, in the distance to the left is the Hotel des Invalides, on the right the Eiffel Tower, and in the left foreground, just beyond the motor bus, is seen the Strasbourg Monument, perpetually covered by wreaths and immortelles in memory of the "lost provinces" of Alsace and Lorraine.

"Well, I don't know the gentleman scouting around up there," I replied, "but he's a friend of mine. I salute him." And I did.

I spoke in a spirit of fun, and yet I truly felt a profound gratitude to the chap up there in the bitter cold of that moonlight night doing his best to protect me—or, at least, to protect the city of Paris, and that included me.

In a few moments we saw other lights moving swiftly here and there across the sky—one here, one over there, one yonder—perhaps half a dozen all told. They seemed to have regular "beats," for, watching a certain light, we would see it turn and go back and forth over much the same territory (if one can use the term in referring to the air). They were searching for the enemy, and I touched my cap to the nervy men patrolling the heavens ready to give battle.

As we stood watching the unusual sight, a flaring light burst out in the sky and lingered for a moment, hanging there like a huge cylinder of white flame. It was a flare-shell fired by one of the defense batteries in the suburbs of the city. At first we novices thought a plane had caught fire. Other flare-shells were

fired, but the German airmen never reached the city. Why they turned back without attacking, or how they were kept from reaching the city is one of the questions for which I was never able to learn the answer.

We watched the patrol-planes and the flare-shells for some time, and then an auto sped through the streets bearing a bugler who sounded a short, lively call on his trumpet. It was the "All clear" signal, and in a very few minutes the streets began to fill with people who had been hiding in the *abris* (shelters), and they laughed and chatted so merrily that I was reminded of the evening when the *Espagne* had cast anchor within the protection of the submarine nets. The merriment suggested to my mind that it was born of relief from a nervous strain.

This was the only alarm that came during my first short stay in Paris. The days and nights were busy ones for all of us. Conferences and schools of instruction at headquarters, No. 12 Rue d'Aguesseau, lectures and work of various kinds at night filled our waking hours. Our sight-seeing had to come at such

odd times as we were able to extract from the almost continuous program of duties, but we improved all our opportunities in this respect and managed to visit some of the world's most interesting show-places. And withal I never tired of studying the people and their customs.

One hears much of the wickedness of Paris; it is not uncommon to hear discussions of French moral standards, and, usually, the expressed opinion does not reflect credit on the French. Possibly no other one question has been put to me oftener than the query concerning this proposition. Frankly, I do not feel qualified to answer—and I greatly doubt the qualifications of many others who have boldly hurled the cynic's ban.

If one were to judge wholly by surface indications, I fear the verdict would be that the French moral standards are not as high as our American standards—but I deplore the judgment that is rendered upon such evidence. It cannot be sound. It may, perchance, be a true verdict, just as one may shut his eyes and throw, and by some freak of chance hit the target.

The truth is that I never visited Paris without finding the streets in the evening literally swarming with women and girls soliciting men. I have seen as many as twenty-five in a distance equivalent to one New York square, although Paris is not laid off in squares, as are our American cities. Most of these street-walkers were young, and all were busily accosting soldiers. If the man accosted shook his head or even ignored the advances the girls would leave him instantly and seek another victim. There was no "rough work," as persistent and insistent advances would be called in our country, and no one paid the slightest attention to the maneuvers—except Americans, to whom such boldness was most extraordinary. In America the police would have filled patrol-wagons with the creatures, but over there the police gave not the slightest heed, even though the girls of the street frequently elbowed the officers in reaching their intended prey. And this, too, on the most prominent streets—not in a "red light" district.

Shocking? I grant it. But what does it prove? Perhaps it proves that the moral

standard over there is not the equal of ours, inasmuch as the French give this practice no heed, while in America we call the patrol-wagons. Perhaps it does not. I am not sure as to what it proves beyond the fact that they have a viewpoint on that problem that is different from ours. They openly allow what we secretly permit, but that this proves them to have a lower moral standard than that of which we boast I am not ready to admit.

During all of my stay in France I found the people to be very frank in their attitude toward many things that we Americans are accustomed to camouflage, and I found them just as puzzled over our point of view as we were at theirs. I am not now referring to the sex question alone, but to other matters, also, that have to do with phases of what, as a bit of euphemism, I have heard referred to rather gingerly as "natural laws." I am quite sure that the French no more understand our attitude of pretense than we do their mental honesty. They are apt to discuss without embarrassment that which we remark in whispers or diffidently confide to our family physician.

If you care to know it, I much prefer our American attitude—and yet I am honest enough to insist that it does not prove anything immoral against the French. In fact, I heard many Americans in France—ministers, (even bishops), university professors, men of large affairs—say on more than one occasion, "After all, is not the French viewpoint the more sensible one? Why not be honest?"

True it is that the returning millions in khaki will relate to American ears many tales that will tend to prove the low moral standard of the French, but, I ask you, what tales could three millions of French soldiers tell upon their return home if they had spent from one to two years in a war-torn America—where we are less honest on those questions than are the French?

I have not studied statistics on the question—if there are any of the grisly things—and I do not pretend either to acquit or condemn the people of France on the charge so frequently made against them in this country, but my answer to the question concerning their moral standards is that so far as I am concerned, my

observation and study revealed many things that were unusual to my Americanized notions, but nothing that, being analyzed, ever failed to raise in my mind the old proposition of the beam and the mote.

Referring to my statement that the policemen did not interfere with the street-walkers, I might add that the Paris officers seemed to have a different conception of their duties and importance than that which the majority of the police in our large cities of America hug to their hearts, though America is witnessing an improvement in this respect. Over there they are a quiet, gentlemanly lot. I made it my business to observe them a number of times when conditions were rather vexing, and never did I hear one of them speak a loud word, nor did I ever see one of them browbeat or roughly use any one. Nevertheless they handled the situations effectively. When I consider how our New York and Chicago policemen are usually bellowing at some one or seizing a luckless wight by the arm and slamming him this way or that, I find myself very much pleased with the Paris police.

One hears much of the courtesy of the French, and it is a tribute they well deserve. And yet, I found them somewhat inconsistent in that respect. I never saw an instance where they were not seemingly—and I believe genuinely—glad to go out of their way to direct one to his destination, happy to do their utmost in helping out in a struggle with the language, or to render almost any service one can imagine. Always they were most considerate and polite when we blundered terribly in our efforts to speak French—courteous and patient where I fear most Americans would have laughed had the cases been reversed, not that the American would intentionally offend, but because the average American lacks that indescribable innate sense of courtesy that is the heritage of the average Frenchman, no matter how lowly his birth. But while all of this is true, be it recorded that I never saw a Frenchman, or his sister or his cousin or his aunt, who would hesitate in the least to crowd in front of you while you were inspecting a show window. They will shoulder you aside very ungently, step on your toes, and do other things

equally rude without the slightest evidence of being aware of their discourtesy. Only the most ignorant or brutal American would do this.

How do I explain it? I don't.

One visiting Paris for the first time must inevitably be surprised at the comparatively few people there who speak English. So close to England and thronged with English tourists for countless years, one would expect to find the English language no mystery to them, and especially in the business places. For disillusionment on this point I refer the reader to any American who has gone joyously and hopefully into the stores in whose show windows were signs, "English Spoken." Usually, the English lexicon consists of very poor attempts at "Good-morning," "No," "Yes," followed by a flood of French. Of course, the large stores have interpreters.

Taxi fare is so ridiculously cheap as compared with the tariff in America that the average Yank upon discovering the fact promptly entered upon a taxi debauch. But woe unto him who failed to understand that every taxi

driver expected his *pourboire* with his fare. "*Pourboire*" is the French word for "tip," and is pronounced "poor-bwar," with the "r's" very indistinct. The word sounds to American ears so much like "poor boy" that it is very often thus pronounced by careless linguists from this side of the sea. And, besides, "poor boy" is so significant of the meaning! The *pourboire* is usually figured at ten per cent of the fare, and the driver demands his tip just as insistently as he demands his fare. I never saw the question tested, but I am inclined to believe that the police would back up his demand for *pourboire*.

In fact, the *pourboire* occupies a very prominent place in all of one's movements over there, even more so than in our America, impossible as this statement may seem to travelers in this country. Even the ushers in the "movie" theatres over there must be given a *pourboire*. They lead the patron to his seat and then stand and hold the flashlight full on him until ten, fifteen or twenty centimes (two, three, or four cents) are handed over. Then there is a whispered, "*Merci,*" ("Thanks") that is little

more than a sibilation and one is left to enjoy the triumphs of the hero.

There are very few surface street-cars in Paris, the transportation consisting of auto-busses, taxis, and the subways. The subways are excellent in their plan and their service. There are no express trains as in our American subways, nor do the guards call any stations. Perhaps one might wish for the express trains—but who ever understood a station name as called by a subway guard in America? So the absence of this unintelligible growl brings no pang to the American traveler on the Paris subways. The cars are entered by doors in the middle of the car, not at the ends. Beside each door is a list of stations, printed in large, plain type, in their proper order, and in the tunnel near each station, and also on the platform of the station are large signs bearing the name of that station, so that it is a perfectly easy matter for one to consult the list by the door and determine just how many stops there are before he reaches his destination, and then the signs in the tunnels and on the platforms will tell him when he

is approaching his station and when he has reached it.

If it is necessary for one to change cars and take a different branch of the subway, he can determine his route, where to change, etc., by consulting maps on the inside of the cars with the routes plainly marked thereon, and after he reaches the changing point he will find large maps on the walls with all routes and stations plainly marked, and beside the maps and at every turning point in his change to the other branch large arrows over lists of stations will direct him to his proper platform. If one can read one cannot make a mistake in reaching his destination.

That first period in Paris was filled with interest, and each night before giving myself up to sleep I sat down to the folding typewriter that I carried with me throughout my wanderings overseas and faithfully recorded in my loose-leaf diary the results of the day's experiences and study.

Thus sped the days until I was ordered into the field. I had been before the chief secretary for conference and had been assigned to what

was then the farthest front American Y. M. C. A. hut in France.

So there came a night when I packed my field kit, placed my trunk in storage, said good-bye to Paris friends, and was ready for the morrow's start toward the battle lines. A secretary from headquarters who was in touch with the different hut locations dropped in to chat a while before retiring. I told him of my assignment. He looked at me solemnly for a moment.

"That's a pretty 'hot' post," he replied. "The Germans bomb it every night." He arose to go, and put out his hand. "Best of luck!"

"Thank you," I answered. "You're the original Cheerful Cherub."

CHAPTER VI

THE BILLETING OFFICER

AT noon the next day I changed cars at Chaumont, the headquarters of General Pershing, and availed myself of the opportunity of visiting the nerve-center of the American army in France.

General Pershing lived in a delightful old château at the edge of the town, and still farther out were his official headquarters, an ancient French artillery barracks surrounded by the usual stone wall. As I rambled around in the quadrangle I heard the purr of an automobile motor and an instant later every soldier near snapped to attention. I glanced around and saw a limousine with the stars of General Pershing's rank upon the windshield glide past, and the gray-moustached commander-in-chief of the boys from the new world was sitting with his face close to the window.

Back at the railway station I found two or

three companies of French infantry in heavy marching order waiting to take the same train that was to bear me on the next stage of my journey. It was bitter cold, but apparently they did not mind it, as they stood or sat about, singing snatches of song and smoking cigarettes.

Between Paris and Chaumont the roadbed had been pretty good, and the train had been a comfortable one, but beyond Chaumont the branch-line train of uncomfortable cars jolted and swayed and jogged slowly, with long waits at different points, one of these waits being to permit a troop-train of French artillery to pull out ahead of us. Then we would bump forward again in the rapidly deepening gloom. Only the dimmest of blue-shaded lights were permitted in the cars, and there was a total absence of heat, so we wrapped our blankets about us (there were two other secretaries going part of the way with me), stared out at the snow-blanketed world, and each thought of the warmth and light and cheer of a home across the sea. What were they doing right now, back there beyond that rolling ocean? Sleeping, if

sickness had not laid its hand upon them, for it was now long after six o'clock and that meant after midnight at home.

It grew colder, and the labored puffing of the engine indicated that we were toiling up grade. A French officer came to the door of our compartment and spoke a few words, and then, peering closer in the gloom, he saw our campaign hats and recognized his mistake in nationality. Checking his speech, he exclaimed, "*Pardon, Messieurs!*" touched his brilliantly-braided cap in salute and turned away. Through the deep shadows I saw a wound stripe on his sleeve, and the faint light glinted dully on the *croix de guerre* upon his breast.

A long, shrill whistle from the locomotive and we began to hear activity in the side aisle, French officers calling one to another. We were coming into Neufchâteau, where I was to spend the night before going on to my field station.

We alighted from the dark cars at an equally gloomy station, where American military police inspected our traveling permits, after which we were directed up the street to the

Hotel Providence. Later I was to learn that "Providence" is a favorite name for hotels in France, much, I suppose, as "Grand" is in America. I have never seen any particular significance attached to either name.

Shall I ever forget the room to which I was shown that night? Not while any thought of the great war clings to my memory. Madame, the proprietress, summoned Marie, the wooden-shoed maid, handed her a key and spoke one word, "*Vingt*" (twenty). Marie murmured, "*Oui, oui,*" in a frightened tone, seized a candle, opened a door and plunged into a void of darkness and cold and started her clattering way up two flights of stairs, followed by me, lugging my heavy field pack. Then down a long hallway she went, the candle giving such a feeble light that I could scarcely see the girl, and I had the odd feeling that I was following a sputtering, spooky light that bobbed through space and was accompanied by a heavy clattering from ghostly feet.

Unlocking the door to No. 20, she placed the candle on a table and clattered away without a word. I entered, raised the candle above

my head and looked about me. The floor was bare, there was one rickety chair, a dirty, decrepit stand, a wash-bowl thick with dust, a pitcher broken in two near its middle and containing no water, a ramshackle bed, and a cot. The one window in the room was heavily coated with frost. The cold bit me to the bones. I took the half-pitcher and, holding the candle above my head, went prowling through the halls in search of a water-faucet.

I came to a door bearing a sign indicating that I had found that for which I was searching. Entering, I found that there was a water-faucet in the room, but the faucet was frozen, and the bowl of the sanitary was full of ice. I gave it up, returned to my room, blew out the candle and made my way down to the office by the aid of my electric flashlight, after locking the door with the ponderous key. I am sure that one of the vivid memories that every traveler will bring back from France will be of the huge keys they use over there. I have seen some almost large enough to be used as weapons.

Down in the office a companion who was to

share No. 20 with me was awaiting my return. To his inquiries as to what kind of a room we had, I replied, "'There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars'—and still another glory of the Hotel Providence. We have it."

I rejoiced in the hearty "Ha! Ha! Ha!" with which he responded, for it revealed a sense of humor. I knew he would have need of it. The office was lighted by one oil lamp, the chimney of which was well blackened by smoke. In the center of the room was a small stove in which a feeble fire was burning, and about which French and American soldiers were clustered, each trying to get a foot or a hand within reach of what little heat there was. (At that time coal cost from $75 to $90 a ton.) There was no conversation. They simply stood and smoked in silence, broken only by the explosion of laughter by my friend. But even this burst of merriment did not create any commotion. A few turned and looked toward him, but most of the men gave no heed and continued to smoke in silence, their eyes fixed on space.

"Cheerful place, isn't it?" whispered my companion. "Let's go eat."

We found our way into the long dining-room, and this, too, was crowded with soldiers, fighting men of five nations—French, Americans, British, Algerians, and Italians—being gathered about the tables that filled every available foot of the room. And here, also, silence reigned. The room was lighted (if such a term can be used to describe the faint illumination) by an oil lamp at either end of the place, and the air was thick with the fumes of wine and tobacco smoke.

Only an occasional mutter of conversation was heard. For the most part the soldiers ate and drank and smoked in silence, staring gloomily at their plates or at nothing in particular. Apparently each man was busy with his own thoughts.

In the course of time another sabot-clad serving-maid placed a bottle of the cheap red wine in front of each of us without its having been ordered and then turned away without a word to bring our food. The wine was included in the price of the dinner, and it had

not occurred to the waitress that we might not care for it. To my surprise it was an excellent dinner, served in many courses, and with frequent changes of plates, as is the French way. For the meal we paid five francs, a little less than a dollar.

While we were eating there was a bit of bustle as two American military police came in, wrapped in mufflers and the helmets that every mother, sister, wife and sweetheart in America was knitting in those days. They examined the passes of all American enlisted men and then cautioned the soldiers not to be caught in the place after eight-thirty. The response was usually a nod or a muttered growl.

" If I were starting out to shoot happy men I'd never snap a cap at this crowd," observed my companion as we arose and started for room No. 20.

He was a son of the Southland, unaccustomed to severe cold, and as he followed my flashlight up the two flights of stairs, down the hallway and into our abiding-place for the night his teeth chattered and whenever he spoke it was with a quick intake of the breath. The bed

was not large enough for two, and as I was from the North, I gave him the bed while I bunked on the crazy old cot. Instead of undressing, we each put on additional clothing, including one of the knitted helmets, and turned in.

The building cracked and popped as winter's grip tightened; outside we heard a bugle sounding tattoo, the notes spluttering in a queer way as if they were freezing as they leaped from the trumpet.

Breakfast consisted of a vile concoction alleged to be coffee served in a cracked soup-bowl without sugar or cream, dark war bread without butter, and a wee bit of some nondescript *confiture,* the French name for preserves or sweets of any kind. Substitute chocolate for the coffee and add butter to the menu and you have the typical French breakfast at all times. Always there is *confiture,* although oftentimes it would defy analysis or classification. *Confiture* is like charity. It covers a multitude of sins.

We ate off the writing-table in the office, with our backs to the aged stove. The windows

were so heavily coated with frost that we could not see out, and outside the fifing of the truck wheels on the snow emphasized the chill of the room.

Going outside, I saw a small detachment of American infantry marching by, shrapnel helmeted and bundled in scarfs. Closely following them was a smoking field kitchen—or "soup cannon," as they were called—drawn by a mule that looked decidedly homesick for old Missouri.

Down at the "Y" hut I found a number of American soldiers clustered about the stoves—their only place of comfort in that land of suffering. And there, too, I met "Billy" Levere, the secretary in charge of the hut, a man whom I was to know very intimately and admire sincerely in months to come. It is doubtful if any other hut in all of France became so famous for its good cheer and genuine hospitality. It seemed that by spring every Yank in the "Zone of Advance" either knew or had heard of "Billy" Levere, "the John Bunny of the Y. M. C. A." Especially did the boys of the Twenty-sixth (New England)

Division come to know and like him, for he served with them more than with any other division and gave himself unsparingly to their interests. Large of frame and big of heart, radiating good humor wherever he moved, his fame spread until Sir Arthur Yap, head of the British Y. M. C. A., visited " Billy's " hut and invited him to make a tour of the British camps in England for the purpose of spreading his celebrated brand of cheer.

" Where are you headed for? " asked Levere, when I introduced myself. And then when I had told him I received the usual remark that the name of my post always drew: " Pretty ' hot ' up there. Better take your shrapnel umbrella with you."

Whitley, my companion from Paris who had shared No. 20 with me, and who had been assigned to " Billy's " hut, smiled broadly, for he had heard me receive the same information so often by this time that it was becoming laughable. We walked over to a stove, and one of the soldiers cracked a jest with " Billy," who turned and said to me:

" Here's a man from your camp." Then to

the soldier: "Son, this is Mr. Kramer, who is going up to your outfit."

The soldier arose and shook hands with me cordially.

"Maybe you'll like it up there," he said. "Fritz does, for he was still bombing the place when I left there early this morning."

Whitley shrieked.

By the middle of the forenoon the camionette that was to bear me on the last stage of my journey was ready, and we buzzed away in the bright sunshine that was struggling to moderate the temperature. I was accompanied by the divisional secretary and an English driver with a cockney accent that baffled me almost as much as did the French. On that drive I mentally blessed the friends who had presented me with knitted stuff—sleeveless sweater, helmet, wristlets, and scarf.

We passed columns of French infantry and machine-gun detachments marching to the front, the moustaches of the men heavy with their frozen breath. And on that drive I saw my first German soldier—a prisoner plodding along beside the water-cart, under guard. The

villages through which we passed were filled with French soldiers, dozens of field-guns being parked along the narrow, crooked streets. The men were billeted in stables and sheds of various kinds. In another village we met a billeting detail of French soldiers visiting the different houses and arranging for quarters for troops who were to arrive—probably those whom we had passed on the road.

Rejoice, ye blessed America, that no billeting officers came nigh your homes!

A knock at the door, and an officer accompanied by his orderly with note-book in hand, greets you. How many rooms in your home? How many members are there of your family? "Please show us your stable, and your cellar, if you have one."

"Two officers will occupy this room, two more that room, ten men will be billeted in your haymow, six horses will be given stable room; your cellar will be expected to shelter eight people in case of raid or bombardment."

"But, Monsieur, we do not wish to have strange officers in our rooms; we will be much embarrassed if ——"

" Sh-h-h! They will arrive at sundown. Be ready."

And over the door goes a billeting sign, to remain there probably during the war, stating how many officers, enlisted men, and horses can be accommodated on the premises, and how many (if any) can find reasonable *abri* (shelter) in the cellar or elsewhere about the place in case of air-raid or artillery bombardment.

This is the sort of thing that France knew for more than four years. And not always were the unwelcome sojourners in their homes men of their own race, even. There were Englishmen, Americans, Italians, sometimes Belgians, Russians, and occasionally Algerians and Indo-Chinese.

These were occupying rooms in French homes, crowded into French haylofts and sheds; these were everywhere about the premises, everywhere about the village, their trucks and cannon lining the streets; these were the throngs with which French daughters and young sons were surrounded, among which they must make their way when darkness brooded unrelieved by a single ray of light.

Count your blessings, happy America, and pray to your God that no act of injustice or foolishness on the part of your leaders will ever bring to you the like of the four years of shadow through which France staggered grimly and heroically!

A punctured tire detained us in the village where the billeting officer was paying his unwelcome visits, and while our cockney driver worked at the repairing I watched the lieutenant and his orderly as they went from house to house, inspecting, commandeering, turning officially deaf (though perhaps privately sympathetic) ears to the expostulations and entreaties.

"*C'est la guerre!*" ("It is war!") I heard the officer reply to one woman who was pouring forth a flood of what I judged to be pleadings that her home be spared from invasion.

"*C'est la guerre!*" I thought of my own home, of my own town, so far removed from all of this. Overhead an aëroplane droned its way across the wintry sky; far to the southward something was flashing in the sunlight—the bayonets and accoutrements of the advancing

column now winding its way over a hilltop. It is war! A young girl with the bloom of budding womanhood in her cheeks came along the street and I saw her suddenly pause and stare at the dark splotch on the distant hilltop, a splotch that swayed and poured forward slowly, outlined sharply by the snowy whiteness of the landscape in which the scene was framed, an undulating something that gave forth glints as the sun touched it here and there. Then she saw the lieutenant and his orderly come out of a house and tack something over the doorway. Instantly she started back toward her home, turning her head occasionally to glance at the oncoming column of men.

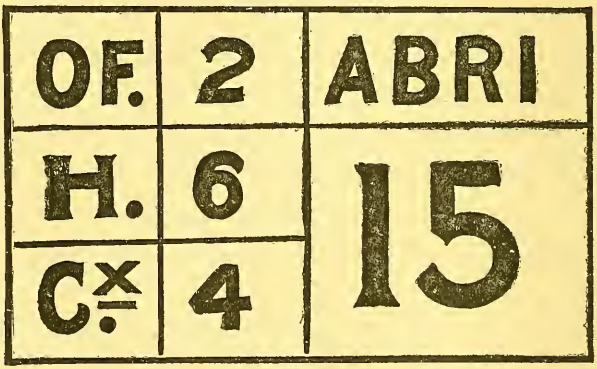
"*C'est la guerre!*" I could not repress a sigh.

Again we sped forward, and an hour later we were making our way through the village where I was to be stationed. The streets were full of French artillery, an American dispatch rider flashed by on a motorcycle, a truck train of Madagascars jammed the road ahead of us and then swung off to one side and halted; our camionette slowly purred its way through the

maze of war's impedimenta until at last the driver drew up in front of a long, low hut.

I dismounted and started toward the hut. As I did so a deep, sullen "Boo-o-o-m!" came rolling toward me, like the muttering of summer thunder. This was followed immediately by another—and many others.

For the first time I was hearing the resentful voices of the guns. At last I was "in the field."



FRENCH BILLETING SIGN

Boards 9 x 15 inches marked in this way were tacked over the doors of homes in French villages to indicate the number of officers, men, and horses that were to be provided for at that location, and the number of people who could find shelter there—in a cellar, probably—in case of air-raid or bombardment.

"OF." means "Officers."

"H." means "hommes," the French word for "men."

"Cx." means "chevaux," the French word for "horses."

"Abri" means "shelter." Note that the "15" under the word, "Abri," does not have any relation to the other figures. It is not intended as a total of the other figures, as many suppose upon first seeing the sign.

CHAPTER VII

THE UNSUNG SONG

AT that time three American aero squadrons—the Eighty-eighth, the Eighty-ninth, and the Ninetieth—were stationed there, and some of the most pleasant recollections of my life are of the weeks and months I spent with these men.

I was fortunate enough to secure, with the aid of the American " town major," a room in a home on the Rue Alexander III. For this room I paid one franc (about nineteen cents) a day, and in addition I paid twenty francs a month for " service," that is, for the care of the room. I was to furnish my own wood for heating and my own oil for the lamp, which Madame was to provide. It was a very good room, a massive bed, an abundance of covers topped with the usual " hickey," as the American soldiers usually called the tick filled with down and feathers that graced nearly every

bed I saw in France. This half-tick extended from the foot of the bed halfway to the pillow. The American soldiers always said that it was a French precaution against anybody getting "cold feet."

The first night I spent there I sank to sleep fully expecting to be raided before morning, so much had I heard about this being a favorite bombing territory for Fritz. But the night was nice and dark and cloudy, so it passed without alarm, and I was awakened in the morning by a rub-a-dub-dub under my window. I pulled aside the heavy curtains, opened the still heavier shutters and peeked out. It was the town crier passing along the street, beating his drum and then shouting his announcements. He would beat a few rub-a-dub-dubs, pause and cry some news or proclamations, then more thumping on the drum, followed by more announcements.

When I began my duties in the hut I discovered that I had more French soldiers (artillerymen) than I had Americans. My instructions, based on orders issued by the French Government, were that canteen supplies must

not be sold to French soldiers. But in Paris I had been told that everything was to be in my hands, that in this out-of-the-way place I would be somewhat cut off from headquarters and must decide questions for myself, so I immediately ruled that all soldiers looked alike to me, so long as they were fighting for the Allied cause. Never a *soldat Francais* was turned away from the canteen counter in that hut.

They were wonderful days and nights up there, with the thunder of the guns in our ears hourly and the crashing of bombs about us a commonplace—for as the weeks went by I learned that there was much truth in what I had been told concerning the post having something of a fascination for the enemy airmen. It was destined to be an important supply station for the air service, hangars, barracks, machine-shops, etc., were being erected near the village, and close at hand was a British and French flying field, from which raids were being continually made on Metz and Mannheim and other important enemy points.

The result was that the whirr of motors was heard above us constantly, sometimes friend,

sometimes foe—oftentimes both. The village, the British and French hangars, and even the "Y" hut bore scars of the German airmen's attacks. So regular were these raids that the American soldiers in the camp composed a little song which became more or less of a favorite:

"Bombed last night,
Bombed the night before—
We're going to be bombed to-night
As we've never been bombed before.
When we are bombed
We're as scared as we can be—
They can bomb the whole damned army
IF
THEY
DON'T
BOMB
ME!

Chorus:

"They're over us,
They're over us,
One little cave for four of us—
But thank the Lord there are no more of us.
When we are bombed
We're as scared as we can be—
They can bomb the whole damned army
IF
THEY
DON'T
BOMB
ME!"

This highly descriptive ditty was first sung at an entertainment given by the soldiers themselves in the " Y " hut on Christmas night and took the camp by storm.

The French soldiers I found to be splendid fellows, worn by their more than three years of fighting, but still courageous and cheerful. One of the facts that my first experience at the front impressed upon me was that the nearer the front one got the less gloom and discouragement one found. In Paris one was surrounded by pessimism. Out here where the guns and bombs were busy one found optimism and an everything's-all-right spirit.

Many of these men in horizon blue were wearing the *croix de guerre,* some were convalescing from wounds, but all were ready to do their part in making things happy for everybody. We had an old, battered piano that was not unacquainted with shrapnel, and this the French loved to play while a rousing chorus sang *" Quand Madelon "* or *" The Marseillaise."* And the louder the guns boomed the louder they sang.

A number of German prisoners were worked

daily in the village, digging trenches for water mains, some of them also being employed at the little sawmill where trench timbers were being turned out.

I have frequently been asked if I saw many German prisoners, how they were treated, how they appeared physically, what was their age, how they seemed to "take" their imprisonment, etc. My answer is that while I was in France I was up and down a great many miles of fighting front, I saw many hundreds of German prisoners, and so far as I could judge ninety-nine out of every one hundred appeared to be *glad they were German prisoners.*

These that were working in the little village where I was first stationed seemed to me to swing their picks and wield their shovels with increased relish the louder the guns thundered "out there." I never saw a German prisoner who appeared weak or ill-fed, and it would take very strong testimony to convince me that any of them were ill-treated or poorly nourished. They were warmly clothed from their feet to their head, on each man's back being painted in large letters, "P. G.," meaning "*prisoner de*

la guerre," (prisoner of war). As to age, I could not see where they differed much from our own men. Oftentimes some one would point out a German prisoner to me and say, " See, he is only a boy," or, " Why, that boche is white-haired." And I would nearly always be able to stand where I was and point to an American soldier who was a mere boy, or to one whose hair was like snow.

Also, I never saw a camp of German prisoners in danger of bombs from German aëroplanes if the raiders dropped bombs where they had a right—shall I say a " warful " right?—to drop them. Germany cannot accuse the Allies of unduly exposing their prisoners.

During my rambles in France I met many German prisoners who told me they lived in Chicago, or Milwaukee, some from New York, one from Omaha. These all told me that they hoped the Allies would win, and that after the war they wanted to return to America to live. As to their expressed hopes that Germany would be defeated I offer no comment. The reader may decide for himself how sincere were

these declarations—and also as to the warmth of welcome America will extend to these former German soldiers.

These prisoners were always guarded by French soldiers who through age or other cause had been incapacitated for strenuous field service. Very few ever attempted to escape, so far as I have learned. The French guards were not at all vigilant, and in one case where I had three German prisoners digging a latrine for my " Y " hut the work was not being done to the satisfaction of the French soldier guarding them, so he calmly leaned his rifle against the stone wall and proceeded to do a lot of the work himself while the three Germans stood with their hands in their pockets beside his rifle, several feet from him.

For a time I was stationed in one of the large huts in France, and each morning a detail of six German prisoners came with two French guards to clean up the place. The guards paid but slight attention to the prisoners, who worked diligently. Frequently the prisoners found money lying about in the hut where it had been lost by the American soldiers, and al-

ways (so far as I know) the prisoners brought this money up to the counter and turned it in. One morning a German prisoner brought to the counter a wad of bills amounting to forty-five francs, which he had found near the stove.

Personally I know of only one German prisoner who tried to escape, although, of course, there were a number of cases of attempted and successful escapes. This case occurred over in Alsace, where I was sent during the summer of 1918. The prisoner had escaped and had hidden in the woods for more than a week, gradually making his way toward the lines until there came a night when freedom lay almost within his grasp. He had wormed his way through the lines, beyond the trenches, and was on the edge of No Man's Land. In two minutes more he would be safe, with his own lines close before him. But in that fateful moment a soldier of one of the Michigan regiments of the Thirty-second Division, on patrol duty and peering intently into the night, thought he detected a movement close to the ground ahead of him. He challenged. No reply. He challenged again. No reply. The

third time he challenged, and the lock of his gun clicked ominously. Then up rose the escaping prisoner.

"*Kamerad! Kamerad!*" he cried.

"All right," replied the Yank, "but keep your hands up!"

Perhaps the German did not understand English, but he understood what the requirements were, and he advanced with uplifted hands, repeating "*Kamerad! Kamerad!*"

As he advanced very near to the American, who was standing with rifle at the "charge," the German suddenly dropped his hands and sprang for the man who had halted him. But the "*Kamerad*" trick was an old story to the boys from over the sea by that time, and as the boche sprang the Yank gave him the bayonet and at the same instant pulled the trigger. The next morning the German was buried near where he had fallen, not far from the little village of Aspach-le-bas, opposite the city of Mulhausen.

During my first days up on the Lorraine front the weather prevented much activity in the air. Snow and wind and heavy fog and

clouds and dense darkness were very welcome, for they kept the enemy airmen from bombing us. Incidentally, of course, it kept our airmen from bombing them—but that fact did not put any wrinkles of worry in the faces of the American soldiers. Their trenches were knee-deep in mud and water and slush, and if dark nights kept Fritz from chasing them into those zig-zagging abodes of misery, so mote it be.

Back in the wonderful America, in days agone we had delighted in moonlight nights, and I doubt not that during those war times many a maiden standing by her chamber window looked out at a wonderful moon and with her thoughts flying across the sea, exclaimed, "O beautiful moon, I hope you are shining just as brightly above him this night." If so, said fair maiden was entirely out of tune with the hopes of the soldier lover overseas, who when the moon shone brightly would mutter disconsolately, "Darn that moon. Fritz will be over to-night." And dark nights would be welcomed with, "Gee, but this is a peach of a night. No raid to-night, so it's sweet sleep for me."

In a very short time the American soldiers moved out of their stable and other billets in the village into barracks they had erected in the field west of the village, and here I followed them, erecting a double-walled tent for my "hut."

All hangars and barracks had been carefully and most skillfully camouflaged with fantastic color schemes of paint and by branches of trees draped over them. My tent was of khaki color, and was erected in a treeless field where it could easily be spotted by the airmen on their raids, but the camouflage men immediately transformed it by painting and by sticking in the ground here and there about the tent large cedar trees, with piles of brush placed at irregular intervals, so that the effect was quite remarkable. As one of the boys remarked soon after the camouflage work was finished, "This tent sure looks like what it ain't."

Our own airmen circled above the spot and reported that at a very little height the whole outfit became a clump of trees with the naturally accompanying lights and shadows. The windows of the tent were of some composition

Y. M. C. A. Tent.

Camouflaged with paint and by small trees stuck in the ground and supported by wires. Mr. Kramer in front of the tent,

similar to isinglass and could be raised or lowered if desired. Heavy canvas flaps were tied down over them at night to prevent any ray of light from escaping. Our light consisted of candles and an occasional oil lantern.

Here the men would come during their leisure hours to get warm, to write, to read, to play games, or to purchase canteen supplies of tobacco, chocolate, cigarettes, candles, soap, matches, sardines, salmon, condensed milk, jam, candy, cookies, etc., etc. At night the tent —about 20x60 feet—would be crowded with the men. Now I had none but American soldiers, as the French were in the village, and the hut I had left back there had been placed in charge of a French-speaking American "Y" man who was conducting a *foyer du soldat* ("home of the soldier"), as the "Y" huts for the French were called.

Those winter nights in my little tent will never be forgotten. A double flap was arranged at the entrance, so that no light escaped as the soldiers came and went. And immediately after "chow" on the long winter evenings, when darkness came down early, the boys

would flock to the " Y " tent. In a short time it would be jammed. It was all too small, but it was the best that could be done in those early days, and the soldiers understood and appreciated.

We kept the little French stoves roaring, and about them the lads clustered, swapping yarns, smoking and arguing; the writing-tables would be crowded, every seat would be taken, and many unable to find seats would be standing. In the dim light of candles and through the blue haze of tobacco smoke the khaki-clad soldiers wearing shrapnel helmets were strange-appearing.

Day after day and night after night they crowded the tent, and around the little stoves they argued about everything on earth or in the heavens above the earth, or in the waters beneath the earth—argued about when the war would end; the nebular hypothesis; the political, financial and social condition of Tasmania; who struck Billy Patterson; which is the best State in the Union; the ignorance and inefficiency of all the officers from President Wilson down to the corporal sitting at another stove;

the age of Ann; how many submarines their ship sighted when they came across (I think something like nine million submarines must have been sighted by the ships bearing our fighting men across the sea, and at least fifty thousand must have been sunk—judging by the numbers given in these daily stove conferences); which squadron had the best cooks; was Marie "spoofing," or was she really smitten with the Irish sergeant; where the bombs struck last night; how badly scared Germany was over the coming of the Yanks; the value of a shrapnel helmet; which make of gas-mask was the best; when the detachment was to move—and where; who landed in the guard-house last night—and why; how many planes just now flew over; whether the corned beef was really beef—or horse or mule; the word that some one's brother's aunt's uncle's friend had sent on the under side of a postage stamp concerning the true conditions in Germany; whether that was a boche plane or a French scout that was fooling around over camp a few minutes ago; who was the worst scared when the bombs crashed last night; the exact meaning of certain

rocket signals the Germans were sending up tonight; how many thousands of Germans were killed or captured the other evening by a few American soldiers who were casually strolling around out in No Man's Land—etc., etc., *ad infinitum*.

" I'm telling the world," was a great expression with the Yanks. They usually prefaced their remarks with it, sometimes using, as a variation, " Go tell the world." They were fond of " telling the world " that if ever they got back to the States the Statue of Liberty would have to turn around if she ever saw them again, the point of this declaration being in the fact that the Statue of Liberty faces the open sea.

When I first reported at this station I was invited by the major in command to join the officers' mess, and did so for a short time. One of the officers was placed in charge of the mess, it being his duty to superintend the purchase of supplies and attend to all matters connected with the operation of the eating-place. A kitchen and a dining-room were hired in one of the village homes, a French woman was em-

ployed, and two or three enlisted soldiers were detailed to assist. The expense of the mess was equally divided between us.

But as soon as possible I arranged to eat with the enlisted men—not because it was cheaper, which it was, but because I felt that my place was with them, that I could best serve them by sharing their fortunes as largely as possible and not by remaining in the necessary exclusiveness of the officers' establishment. Some outfits I messed with charged me fifty cents a day for my food, while others refused to accept any pay.

So I joined the mess-line with my tin plate, cup, etc., and took pot-luck with the privates and the "non-coms," as the non-commissioned officers (corporals and sergeants) are called. When the bugles sounded mess call I would fall in with the others and we would slowly file past the "K. P." (kitchen police), and receive our portions of food. The kitchen police are not really police, as the civilian understands the term, but are men detailed to assist the cooks at the mess-shacks. As we filed past them one would hand us a slice of bread (or

perhaps two slices), another would issue the portions of meat or hash—or whatever there might be in that line—and also the potatoes, another would fill up our coffee-cups. Then we would hunt a seat at the rough tables and enjoy our meal. Very often a particularly hungry man could obtain "seconds," as the second helping was called.

Of course, I have not attempted in the above paragraph to give the soldier's menu. I am simply outlining the way in which the men received their food. And, naturally, this varied greatly, according to the location of the men.

Where I was stationed at this time it was possible for the men to have the food cooked in one end of the mess-shacks and for them to eat at rough tables in the other end of the building. The evening meal in winter had to be eaten in deep gloom (physical, not mental), because only a few lanterns could be used for illumination, and that meant that one usually had but a hazy idea of what he was eating. Usually one was so hungry that he did not much care. He knew it was edible, whatever it was, so, in the

deep shadows of the mess-shack, he attacked whatever was on his plate and ate it on faith.

I have heard a great deal of discussion concerning the food issued to the American soldiers. My experience was that our men were splendidly fed. Without question, there were exceptions to this. Undoubtedly there were instances where this or that outfit fared badly, and there were cases where the "breaks" of luck of this kind seemed to run against certain outfits for sad periods of time. One can only speak especially of the vast majority of cases, and admit that there was a minority.

The men had excellent meat, potatoes, beans, rice, hominy, corned beef, bread, coffee, prunes, and, of course, various other articles that they purchased from time to time with the mess funds they raised by various means. Among these extras, eggs were prominent.

But the great *pièce de résistance* of all Yank meals was "corn willy," as the soldiers called corned beef. The English Tommies called the same thing "bully beef," and the French *poilus* called it "tinned monkey." But no matter

whether one called it corned beef, corn willy, bully beef, or tinned monkey, it was like Tennyson's brook—it went on forever. Really, in the hands of capable cooks, this "corn willy" could be made into excellent food—but after many months of it the most persuasive orator on earth could not convince the average Yank that corned beef was anything but garbage. It is a fact that one can become surfeited with anything, no matter how toothsome.

Receiving one's food in a mess-line is not the most pleasing way imaginable for one to take his meals. The soldier's mess outfit consisted of two tin plates, a tin cup, knife, fork, and spoon. As one marched past the kitchen police and held out his plates everything was piled on the plates without it being possible to separate meat, gravy, potatoes, rice, hash, hominy, prunes, eggs, pudding, pie (for I have known outfits near the front lines to have pudding and pie), syrup, and soup. Whatever one received was thoroughly mixed by the time he was ready to eat it, so that one was seldom bothered as to which article should be eaten first. Soup, entrée, and dessert were allies and were usually

closely associated with each mouthful partaken of.

The question of sugar has interested all Americans, especially those who found it necessary to make one spoonful suffice for the three indulged in before the war. The American soldiers usually had a fair supply of sugar. It was not set before them in big jars into which they could dive in wild sugar debauches, but usually the Yank overseas could have his coffee sweetened. And butter was not as infrequent an article as one might suppose.

After all, the question of whether an outfit was well or poorly fed usually depended upon two parties, the commanding officer and the mess sergeant. Then came the question of cooks—a very important question, too. The government rations were plentiful, good, and of commendable variety, but this fact alone could not possibly insure good food for all the soldiers, any more than the fact that one has access to a well-stored grocery means that he is certain to be properly fed.

I have known commanding officers who paid

not the slightest attention to the welfare of their men as regards food, giving no heed to whether or not the mess sergeant and cooks were performing their duties faithfully and well or whether they were inefficient, neglectful, or dishonest. For the truth is that armies have known cases where dishonest mess sergeants (sometimes with the connivance of dishonest cooks and sometimes acting alone) drew the proper rations for their outfits and then sold large quantities of these supplies to French or others and kept the money, while the men whom they were supposed to feed were put on short rations and had to suffer all that this meant. And, of course, the men blamed the government and complained accordingly. Sometimes these complaints got to proper ears and an investigation would bring about the punishment of the dishonest mess sergeant and a bettering of the food conditions.

Probably there were not many cases of this dishonesty—but there were some. There were also cases where the mess sergeant was inefficient and lacked the knack of " getting all that was coming " to his men. He was honest in his

intentions, but did not understand all the fine points that belong to his position, for, be it known, the mess sergeant of an outfit needs brains. It is no job for a "dub."

And even with an honest mess sergeant who knows how to get all that his men are entitled to—and perhaps a bit more, for that occasionally happens by shrewd manipulation—it does not necessarily mean that the outfit will have good and nourishing food. The cooks must be reckoned with. Any housewife knows that she can stack her pantry and cellar full of excellent food articles—and remain hungry all the time if she has a poor cook who ruins whatever comes to hand. So it is with an army. I messed with outfits that had an abundance of food that was rendered unfit to eat by careless, inefficient cooks, and I messed with other outfits that had the same stuff issued them and whose cooks did wonders with it. Some of the worst meals I ever ate I ate with the American soldiers in France. Some of the best meals I ever ate I ate with the American soldiers in France. The difference lay in the commanding officers, the mess sergeants, and the cooks.

The government had done its part toward each, without favoritism.

Dish-washing in the army was not a matter of elaborate ceremony. When the Yank finished his meal he went to the rear of the mess-shack, scraped the remnants from his plate into a garbage can and then went to the boilers of dishwater. These were large receptacles usually placed over open fires which so surrounded the boilers with smoke that the soldiers nearly always came out of it with streaming eyes and picturesque language. There were two of these boilers with dishwater, one—usually referred to as "No. 1,"—containing boiling soapsuds, and the other—referred to as "No. 2,"—containing boiling water without soap, for rinsing. We would plunge our plates, cups, knives, forks, and spoons into No. 1, stir with them a moment, and then dip them in No. 2, after which we would wipe them with whatever we could find to use for that purpose. Some of the makeshifts I have seen used as dishcloths could not well be referred to here, even though they were effective.

Usually these boilers were surrounded by

soldiers, each fellow in a hurry—Americans are always in a hurry—and struggling to find room for his mess outfit in the boiler. Of course, each man had to hold his utensils in his hands while dipping them into the water—there was no such thing as dropping them in and then calmly fishing them out with convenient articles—and the result was that there was a constant chorus of "Ouch! —— ——, but that's hot!" Many of these boilers were small, sometimes of only four or five gallons' capacity when full, so that by the time one hundred or more men had soused their mess outfits in them the water could almost be sliced. It worked very well in the army, but I wouldn't recommend it for the American home.

We had moved our old shrapnel-marked piano out into the tent, and as the American army was full of splendid musicians, we never lacked for music. In the troops in this camp were some pianists who were really artists, men who occasionally indulged themselves in compositions of the masters, but the favorite numbers with the masses were "There's a Long, Long Trail," "Indiana," (no matter if the

men who called for it were from Maine), "Keep the Home Fires Burning," "Over There," and "Good-bye, Broadway, Hello, France."

But there is one song I never heard in France. It is "Home, Sweet Home." It was never sung; it was never played. Why? In your own heart and soul you will find a better answer than I could give. There was no sign tacked up forbidding it; no one said, "Thou shalt not," no one even whispered a wish that it be omitted. Songs of sentiment, songs of love and tenderness they sang and played—yes; but not "Home, Sweet Home."

Just once did I ever hear its notes sounded, and they were quickly hushed. It happened one wintry night when the storm wind was lashing our little tent and causing it to tug so menacingly at the guy-ropes that two or three times during the early evening I had gone out and driven the stakes still deeper. It was snowing hard. Darkness had come soon after four in the afternoon, and the tent was crowded before six. Some were playing checkers, some dominoes (and may I say that I did not see half a

dozen packs of cards in France. Dice were all too numerous, but there were few cards), every inch of space at the writing-tables was taken, those who had been fortunate enough to find seats about the stoves were engaged in the usual arguments and discussions, the canteen counter was lined, pipes and cigarettes were going full power, and there was a general babel of conversation, jests, and laughter.

I happened to glance up as the tent-flap was raised and a tall soldier entered, shaking the snow from his broad shoulders. He came to the canteen counter, took off his overcoat and I found a nail on which he could hang it. There was no one at the piano at the moment, and the newcomer walked over and seated himself on the stool, which, by some unwritten law of courtesy, was nearly always left unoccupied unless by some one who wished to play.

Seated there, with his shrapnel helmet cocked a bit on one side and with his forty-five automatic pistol swung at his hip, he was decidedly an interesting picture as he ran his fingers nimbly up and down the keys. I noticed that he seemed to be heedless of the scene about him;

his face was raised until his gaze passed unseeingly over the top of the instrument; he was playing softly, probably improvising, and I knew by the look on his face that only the flesh of him was in that tent; the soul of him was across the sea.

Then he did the forbidden thing. Forgetful of all save the scenes where his soul was straying, he struck the opening notes of "Home, Sweet Home." Instantly, as if a general had shouted a command, silence fell. The rattle of checkers and dominoes ceased; the babel of voices stilled; the men at the writing-tables paused; slowly all eyes were turned toward the player. It was a tense moment. The sudden hush brought the player back to his surroundings, and in that instant he realized his transgression.

Watching him closely, I almost held my breath as I waited for the climax of the tense situation. I have always rejoiced that the lad who sat at the piano that night was a youth of rare discernment and quick thought. That he was all of this he quickly proved.

When he realized his offense did he stop

playing and turn from the piano? Oh, no. That would have been tragedy. Had he done this the evening would have been killed, the songs and jests that had been filling the tent would have sounded no more that night, and in a brief time every mother's son of them would have been slipping out into the storm to seek their bunks, downcast and with aching hearts. But the soldier at the piano divined this instantly, I saw but the slightest change in the poise of his head as he glanced aside toward his comrades now staring at him in something of bewilderment. Then without a break in his playing he merged the notes of the—may I use the term forbidden, even though it had never been forbidden except by mutual, unspoken consent?—song into something a bit livelier, and this into something a little gayer, and then that developed into a " rag " that soon had soldier feet patting and soldier arms swaying to its time.

Gradually the checkers and dominoes began again to clack, here and there a joke was flipped, conversation and merriment grew as the man at the piano swung from one rollick-

ing air to another, playing as I had never heard him play before. He was playing with the peace of mind, the morale, if you please, of his comrades as the stakes, and he knew it. He had led them to the brink; he alone could drag them back. And he did. The situation was saved, and when the bugles sounded "Quarters" some time later the soldiers had forgotten the incident. Laughing and jesting they buttoned their coats about them, shouted to me, "Good-night, old man; see you to-morrow," and went plunging out into the whirling snow with all of the bubbling spirits of schoolboys.

The pianist arose and came for his coat. His face was pale and drops of perspiration were on his brow.

"Quick thought and good work, brother," I whispered as I handed him the coat.

His eye caught mine; a flicker of a smile played about his lips.

"It was my fault," he answered so softly that no ears but mine heard. "I was a fool, and I had to do something for their sake. Good-night."

FRENCH AND YANKS.
In Mr. Kramer's first hut in the Toul sector.

CHAPTER VIII

THE AIR-RAID

FOR some days this stormy weather prevailed, and while it was a hardship in many ways, especially on those whose duties kept them exposed to the wind and cold and snow, it afforded many nights when one could sleep without fear of bombs.

But at last there came a balmy afternoon when skies were clear and the air soft. That it was to be a lively evening there was no doubt whatever. The British planes were aloft early in the afternoon, "tuning" their engines and preparing for the attack they were to make a few hours later. There was a constant drone of motors above us, the artillery was roaring, observation balloons were up, and in the village the wise ones were clearing the passageways to the *abris* (shelters).

Before dark the British squadrons were on the wing toward German territory, and our

camp was preparing for the attack we knew full well would come from the other side.

Evening came on with a cloudless sky and a full moon, a wonderful night. Soon after supper an American soldier came into my tent singing,

"It looks to me like a big night to-night."

And he had it right. The artillery activity was increasing. Standing out beside my tent we could see the flame of the cannon fire darting along the crest of the hills and leaping into the sky. Shrapnel was splotching the air with its red hate; above us we could hear the aëroplanes whirring back and forth on patrol; mingled with the thunder of the artillery we could distinguish the peculiar "R-r-r-oo-oo-m-p!" "R-r-r-oo-oo-m-p!" of bursting bombs. Searchlights were moving their long, gleaming avenues here and there across the heavens, seeking the flying foe. Not far away an anti-aircraft battery was firing at intervals. Truly, it did look as if a "big night" were at hand.

Going back into my tent I laid my overcoat, muffler and forty-five where I could reach them

with one grab. A "Y" secretary was not supposed to be armed, but a friend had given me an officer's pistol, and there were many times when I rejoiced in its possession. Later I was at points on the front where the commanding officer insisted on my going armed, one major going so far as to buckle his own belt and pistol about me when I was going forward and had not brought my own gun with me. He was remaining in his shell-proof dugout and would not need it, he said.

That it was a question of only a short time until the enemy would be over us I knew, so I prepared accordingly. Most of the candles in the tent I extinguished, placed all money in my pocket so that if the tent were blown to pieces and I lived the finances would be saved, and then business went on about as usual with the thunder and roar growing momentarily louder.

Things became so lively that most of the soldiers finally left the tent and stood outside, uncertain whether to remain or to seek shelter at once. A few stuck to their writing, "allowing" that they didn't propose to give up their

letters just because of a few shots or a prowling boche plane or two. Then suddenly—"B-oo-oo-m-m-r-oo-oo-m-m!" "Crash!" "Bang!" "Put-put-put-put-put!" The "show" was at our doors.

I stepped outside and viewed the ever-increasing activity. A guard came running toward me.

"All lights ordered out!" he shouted.

I hurried into the tent and repeated the order, my words being echoed by a succession of crashes like unto boiler explosions. Instantly every soldier extinguished the candle before him, and then they came out of there on the run, leaving unfinished letters lying on the tables.

The Germans were not yet over us, but were bombing the British and French camp, just across the fields from us, and the British were fighting back vigorously.

In our camp a bugle sounded. A moment later a soldier with a bugle in his hand came to where I was standing out in the road.

"Do you know where the bugler of the —— squadron is?" he asked. "He is supposed to

sound 'The Call to Arms,' but he can't be found, so the Major ordered me to sound it. I don't know it. The nearest thing to it I can think of is, 'To Horse,' so I sounded that."

"That's good enough," I advised him. "Sound that."

He did. Standing there in the road he sent the notes of the old cavalry call, "To Horse!" ringing out over the hills and fields. As a matter of fact, it served just as well. The call, "To Arms," was not meant to really call the men to arms so much as it was to send them diving into the shelter-trenches. "To Horse!" served just as well.

The machine-gunners were already at their posts, one of these guns being set up just outside my tent. Soldiers in gas-masks and helmets were scurrying for the trenches. But a few of us still remained in the road, fascinated by the wonderful scene that was taking place before our eyes. The white roadway with its background of dark fields stood out in the moonlight like a chalk-mark across a blackboard, and on this roadway we were plainly outlined.

Standing there one of the soldiers began to sing " Good-bye, Broadway, Hello, France." It was his way of showing contempt for the enemy. Another guard came down the road.

" Everybody off the road if you want to die of old age! " he ordered. And I saw the force of his remarks. The song hushed and the singer skedaddled.

Across the fields the fight was getting hotter. The bombs were crashing at more frequent intervals, the anti-aircraft guns were now in a constant roar, interspersed with the heavier thunder of French 75's; rockets and flare-shells and shrapnel were hissing into the sky, and the shrapnel was getting much closer to where we stood. The drone of planes above us had increased in volume, other searchlights had begun to play on the heavens, and the " put-put-put-put " of machine-guns in the air and on the ground was adding to the din and pyrotechnical display.

The guard was right. Clearly, if one desired to die peacefully and years later than that night one had better get off the road, which was liable to be swept with machine-gun fire or

bombs any minute. A corporal and I held a moment's consultation. As a soldier, it was his duty to seek shelter in the trenches, according to orders, but the trenches were deep in slush and water and mud. On previous occasions similar to this "party" I had picked out a more or less dry ditch a short distance from camp that offered excellent shelter facilities, so the corporal decided to join me in the "retreat to victory" to this ditch.

Later he was punished by the major for not obeying the set instructions to go to the trenches when the camp was attacked. But the corporal was not alone in disobeying the trench orders that night. As the fight went on I discovered fully a dozen American soldiers who had chosen to seek shelter outside of the trenches, and these, too, paid a penalty, as a roll call after the affair had ended revealed their absence.

The spot I had selected was about a quarter of a mile down the road, where there was a nice deep, but dry ditch on either side of the road into which we could dive like rabbits, choosing whichever side of the road might best suit our

needs. There we crouched to watch the fight, and it was wonderfully thrilling.

The rolling crash of bombs was almost unbroken and the red glare of the shrapnel was creeping closer and closer to us, its vicious eyes blinking almost above us. I was fascinated as I never had been before.

The searchlights were crisscrossing the sky, methodically searching for the foe, and then holding the German planes in their light whenever found. Here and there high above us streams of fire would spurt horizontally across the heavens as the planes of friends and enemy, maneuvering, seeking, dodging, chasing, swooping and circling, opened on each other with their rapid-fire guns.

Once I saw one of these streams of fire dart straight down the long pathway of a searchlight. A German plane had been caught in the electric glare and the gunner had opened fire on his tormentor and was endeavoring to shoot the searchlight out of action. But the betraying gleam was not to be gotten rid of, and steadily it followed the German here and there. A moment later another stream of sparks

darted horizontally across the sky toward the ribbon of light, and I knew that a British or French plane was carrying the fight to the Hun who had been thus revealed.

Over in the British camp a column of red fire suddenly shot up from the ground, and I learned later that it was an English plane that had been forced down out of control and then destroyed by a direct bomb hit just as it touched the ground. A little later flames burst out high in the air and another British plane was destroyed, crashing to earth a mass of twisted and charred steel and timber. The fight that night was distinctly a German victory. Why hide the truth now?

The droning of the planes became still louder. Above us were ten German fighting-planes (according to the best authority obtainable afterward), twelve British planes, and two French planes. Peering intently upward, the corporal and I made out a plane rushing toward us. It was flying very low and we crouched in the ditch, forty-fives in hand, ready to return the fire as best we could should it prove to be an enemy. At the low altitude at

which it was flying we would have a fair chance of doing some damage even with pistols.

On it came, a huge, dark object sweeping across the moonlit sky like a mammoth bird of evil omen. We were not afraid of being bombed even if we were seen, for bombs were too valuable to waste on two men, but Fritz would be apt to open with his machine-guns and sweep the road and ditch. So we waited and watched, straining our ears to catch the sound of the motors that would tell the story as to whether it was friend or foe flying toward us. One's ears rather than his eyes told him whether a plane was that of friend or enemy, for the motors in the allied machines worked with a steady (or practically unbroken) drone, while the German motors were intermittent in their sound, something like this: "Z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z!"

Always when one heard a plane that his eyes could not identify he listened for the sound of the motor, and if the tell-tale intermittent droning was heard he would—if he were wise—locate shelter immediately. The question has frequently been asked as to whether a falling

bomb can be heard. Usually—if not always—they can. They make a weird whistling sound that can be heard a moment before they strike; that is, of course, if one is near the missile.

The French have an expression, "*tout de suite,*" meaning immediately. It is pronounced "toot d'sweet," and usually the Americans omitted the "d" entirely and pronounced it "toot sweet." When a Yank wanted something done in a hurry by the French he always added emphatically: "Toot sweet—and the tooter the sweeter!"

So when one heard the whistle of a bomb he "hit the ground," to use a soldier expression, "toot sweet—and the tooter the sweeter." The shrapnel and fragments of exploding bombs usually rise slightly as they spray in all directions, so that it is important for a soldier to get as flat on the ground as possible in the hope that the deadly shrapnel will fly over him. Still safer, of course, is it to get below the surface of the ground if possible. Thus, if one is in a trench or a ditch he is comparatively safe unless the bomb drops directly into the trench or ditch.

When men were fleeing from bombs they would run until they heard the vicious whistle of one and then they would throw themselves flat upon the ground, rising after the explosion, if able to do so, and running until the next whistle was heard, and then again throwing themselves prone upon the ground.

The plane sweeping toward us as we crouched in the ditch proved to be a British Handley-Page. Not only did the sound of its motors tell the story, but as it reached a point almost directly over us it flashed its electric signals, for you must know that these planes carry different-colored signal-lamps that can be winked at will by the pilot. They used a regular code of signals—usually changed nightly—whereby they could identify themselves to the gunners below, who, otherwise, might not trust to the sound of the motors, or who amid the din of fighting might not be able to distinguish sounds.

I saw a great deal of air work during the war, and I pause now to say that I acknowledge the courage of the men who fight their country's battles thousands of feet above the

earth—no matter what their nationality is. I am ready to salute a brave man whoever he is, and over there in those days the air was full of them.

There came a lull in the " show " and I heard voices across a field. Clearly they were Yanks. The corporal and I went across and found a little group of our men sitting in the shadows of trees, on the railroad track that ran near camp.

" What in the world are you fellows doing here? " I asked.

" Why, Kramer," one answered, " this is the biggest show we've ever seen—and we have reserved seats."

That was their spirit. That was the spirit of the American soldier or sailor wherever he was tested in this war. Undaunted, when peril came nigh these boys grinned and jested. God bless them, the world never saw their superiors, and never will see them.

For a time the firing was desultory, and the little group I had joined started out across the plowed field toward the road leading back to camp. When we were in the middle of this

field the fight suddenly broke out again with greater fury than ever. Shrapnel sprayed the air more thickly than previously, the anti-aircraft guns and 75's were roaring louder than before, and the bombs were fairly raining, so much so that one of the soldiers with me exclaimed:

"Oh, boy! Fritz is unloading 'em with a scoop now!"

The "put-put-put" of the machine-guns seemed to have redoubled, and the angry flashes of the batteries were now almost unbroken. Perhaps it is not necessary for me to say that we lost our desire to reach the road. Our promenade came to a sudden halt. Then a searchlight began swinging its avenue of light directly over us. We heard the "z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z" of a German motor above us, and instinctively every man "hit the ground toot sweet"—and I insist that none of them hit it any "tooter" than I did. Each man chose for himself a nice deep furrow and stretched out in it. Probably each man wished he could burrow a bit deeper. I so wished.

All of the soldiers wore their gas-masks at

the "*alerte*" position, that is, buckled up against their chests ready to be slipped on immediately. At that time each American soldier was provided with two gas-masks, a British mask and a French mask, the latter being carried as an emergency affair, to be donned in case the British mask should be damaged. Later in the war the French masks were not issued, experience having proven that more men became casualties through errors of judgment in changing masks than suffered because of having but one mask upon which to depend.

At the time I speak of I had no gas-mask, nor helmet either, for that matter. Repeated efforts to obtain them had failed. The army authorities either thought that a Y. M. C. A. secretary was more skillful in dodging shrapnel and shell fragments than were the soldiers or else they figured that a dead secretary here and there did not matter. Later they adopted a different attitude, but up to this time all my efforts to obtain a helmet or gas-mask had failed, and I was going through this affair with my campaign-hat and no mask.

As I lay stretched out in my furrow I heard

my name called from out in the field. I answered, and presently a soldier came crawling toward me. Unslinging his French gas-mask, he handed it to me.

"Put this on," he said. "Fritz may drop some of his suffocating hell."

"No, no," I protested. "It's against orders. Each soldier must carry both masks. I can't take yours."

"Orders, hell!" he exclaimed. "I've got my other mask, and you have none. Take it or I'll take off my other one and throw them both away!"

I took it. Think you that there shall ever come a day when that soldier's act will have been forgotten by me?

The fight continued for about two hours. Then the firing died away, and except for the droning of the Allied planes above us silence fell over the scene. In the American camp a bugle sounded "Recall," and the scattered troops began gathering home. A little later there was another brief period of firing, a skulking German plane having been detected. But it was of brief duration. I opened the "Y"

tent and a number of soldiers came in to get warm, although no lights were allowed. Then " Quarters " sounded, and a few minutes later " Taps " broke the stillness that had come upon that part of the world.

I found that none of the Americans had been hit. In fact, the Americans had not been permitted to take part in the fight. Our gunners were at their stations and begging for permission to open on the Huns, but our camp had not been directly attacked, even though the air-fighting was over us, and the commanding officer—perfectly correctly, no doubt—had ruled that so long as we were not especially attacked it was best to keep out of the affair, as our batteries by going into action would betray the location of our cleverly camouflaged camp.

During the entire action the thing that particularly interested me was the fire of the machine-guns. Why? I cannot explain it. But amid all the din of the fighting I found myself listening with a sort of fascination to the " put-put-put " of the machine-guns. If one wishes to get some idea of the sound of machine-gun firing he can do so by saying " put-put-put "

as rapidly as possible, giving the " u " the short sound, as in " hut." To my mind this is as good a description as can be given on paper. Or if you chance to hear some one beating a carpet a short distance from you the sound will be much like that of a machine-gun in action. During all of my stay along the front these weapons always chained my attention, even when heavy guns were thundering at the same time.

The exact losses of the British in the affair I was never able to learn. But three of their machines were destroyed and a number of their men were killed and wounded. Not a German plane was brought down.

That the Germans were searching for the American camp there is not much doubt, as some of their machines flew quite low while passing over us, and there seems good reason to believe that our camp escaped the deluge of bombs through a peculiar combination of facts.

A water system was in course of construction in our camp, and by reason of some officer's blunder a large tank was placed high

above the highest point, to serve as a standpipe. The tank was a perfect landmark for any one seeking to locate the American camp, as it could be seen for miles. All of our barracks and hangars had been carefully concealed and camouflaged—and yet that tank was placed high in the air, a screaming advertisement of our position. It was an almost unbelievable blunder.

After it had been up there some time and had been the butt of grim jokes among all of the soldiers, who termed it "Our invitation to Fritz," an inspecting officer visited our camp one day. He took one look at that bit of folly and ordered it taken down immediately. Within the hour the men who had labored so hard erecting it were tearing it down. That same day a German plane was shot down near Toul, and in the pilot's possession was found a splendid photograph of our position, with that water-tank looming up like a lighthouse on a dark night.

The next night the attack came, but when the Germans circled over us they were unable to discover the water-tank that would have so

easily guided them in locating important points in our camp. Puzzled by their inability to find the landmark so plainly shown in their aëroplane photographs, and with our guns remaining silent, they did not risk wasting bombs on uncertainties, but dumped all of them on the British.

It is not strange, however, that the British received so much attention from the Germans as our Allies had erected their barracks and hangars out in an open field, placed closely together, at regular intervals and angles, the sides and tops of the hangars being of corrugated iron, with not the slightest attempt at camouflage. The result was that it photographed perfectly in the daytime, and on moonlight nights it fairly glittered.

Why the Royal Flying Corps with its years of war experience should have built a camp like that is as inexplicable as why that conspicuous water-tank was placed aloft over our camp. Luckily, the tank blunder was rectified in time to save us from loss of life, but it required frequent attacks and considerable loss of life among the British and the French (whose

hangars were built adjoining the English and in the same manner) before they learned their lesson. The French were first to acknowledge their blunder. They abandoned their hangars and sought a more sheltered place, but the British had to be hammered again and again before they confessed their error, a typically English trait, I may remark.

The next night after the raid I have referred to, immediately after dark all the British soldiers with the exception of a guard detail, slipped out of their exposed camp and came to the American camp, where we sheltered them and made them as comfortable as possible. They crowded our "Y" tent, and the American boys gave them the places around the stoves and gave them all of our chairs. Early in the morning the British returned to their camp, and then slipped back to us again at night. They acknowledged that they were "fed up" on raids and that it was inviting death to remain out in their exposed barracks. So night after night they came to us, and always our fellows extended them every courtesy, divided cigarettes—or "fags," as the British

call them—and did their best to make them comfortable.

In the meantime the British had gotten busy and were erecting barracks and hangars back in the woods that bordered the open field where they had been camping. Their new camp was perfectly concealed from air-scouts, and was such as they should have constructed in the first place.

They also played a neat little trick on Fritz that later afforded all of us much amusement. When they moved into their new quarters back in the woods they left their old barracks and hangars standing, empty, out in the field. Not long after they had made the change the Germans came a-raiding once more. They flew over the old field at considerable height and dropped bombs.

Always before, the British were quick to fight back, but this time not a gun was fired from the ground. "Z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z" purred the boche motors as they circled above the old fighting ground. Then they swooped lower and again cut loose with their bombs, but not a sound save the crashing

of their own explosives came from below. "Z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z," and the Huns flew back and forth, plainly puzzled, while back in the woods the Tommies laughed and joked. Then again the Germans swooped, and this time their machine-guns raked the hangars and barracks. No reply.

Mystified, they flew away at last, while Tommy went peacefully to sleep, his new position undiscovered, a position from which he would sally forth in the evenings and attack the enemy, and to which he would dash back and hide in safety.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT THE YANK WILL NOT FORGIVE

WHILE I have described but one of the raids, they were of frequent occurrence. But one raid is very much like another. Each has its dramatics, its sorrows, and its humor.

Often our evenings of song and frolic were interrupted by the sudden crash of bombs, the shout of "Lights out!" and the general dash for the trenches. Men who were engrossed in letter-writing one second would in the wink of an eye be grabbing candles and blowing desperately at them, chairs and benches and tables would be upset in the stampede, and I would be alone in the tent. Not for long, however. They did not join me. I joined them.

If you find the right men they will still tell you laughingly of a night when bombs crashed close to the hut and how one or two of them in the first panic sprang over the canteen

counter and landed on others who were flat on the floor back of the counter, seeking even this scant protection from the shrapnel that flew close around. Or they will tell you of jumping into the trenches and alighting on some Yank who had beaten them to that particular spot; or of the soldier who was in the camp hospital suffering with rheumatism so that he had to have his meals carried to him—but when the shrapnel rattled against the little hut of a hospital, barefooted he passed a lot of good runners on their way down the road. These things were not evidences of cowardice. You can't intimidate a bomb by defying it.

I was in the village a time or two when the boche came over, and it was a bit funny to see how the French soldiers and civilians fled for safety. French soldiers wearing the *croix de guerre,* the insignia of valor, ran as quickly as the others. The years had taught them the foolishness of loitering in the open when bombs were falling.

Nearly all of the French in that section wore wooden shoes, and the instant the French bugle sounded the raid alarm there would be the wild-

est sort of clatter from these shoes as the people fled to cover. Oftentimes French soldiers would jump in the odd two-wheeled carts, and plying the whip to the horse they would go bouncing away to safety, looking up and back over their shoulders to see if the foe was nigh. I have seen families hurry to basements, and there the mother and her children would cower in terror, with little gasping cries as the terrible roar of the bursting bombs was heard, not knowing what instant one of the awful engines of destruction might come crashing into their midst; I have seen women and children running out of the town to the neighboring hills. And amid it all one feels how utterly helpless he is in an air-raid.

Those who man the batteries and fight back have the sense of satisfaction that doing something affords—but even they know full well that there is slight chance of hitting the flying enemy.

And thus the time passed—air-raids, the thunder of artillery, the night skies splotched with shrapnel and flare-shells, the while we watched

"Rocket green and rocket red
In trembling pools of poising light
With flowers of flame festoon the night."

As the winter waned the foe's artillery activity increased, and it was generally believed that the long-looked-for German drive was at hand. American divisions were taking over sectors of the fighting line, day after day columns of French infantry or artillery passed, generally marching toward Verdun, whose guns we could hear in the distance. Around St. Mihiel the Americans were now getting their baptism of fire. Toul and Nancy were bombed night after night. Big guns were being brought up from the rear and mounted in the woods about us, ready for the expected drive should it fall upon our section. Observation balloons were more in evidence during the day, at night searchlights crisscrossed the sky, and strange signals burned their way into the darkness.

Spies and treachery were all about us, and afield at night one never knew whether it was the cry of a night bird or the signal of a traitor that he heard. Vigilance was redoubled; from

unexpected places in the darkness would come the harsh challenge of guards, and a flashlight would be full in one's face the moment he replied.

Not a light was permitted to show either in camp or in the village. Should a glimmer be seen the guards were there in a few minutes with reprimands and warning of punishment. That ray of light might be treason's signal, or it might, unintentionally, work mischief in some other way.

All about us now were American, French, Madagascar, Algerians, Indo-Chinese, British, a few Italians, and a few Russians. And yet there was but little crime, and although women and girls went freely and alone through the pitch-dark streets I never knew of more than one being molested, and that was a young girl who was seized by a Madagascar and promptly rescued by an American.

On Sundays there were ball games, and at night I usually conducted something in the way of religious services, being my own song-leader and preacher, although I am neither a minister nor a singer. Ever since the lady who bears

my name learned that I acted as song-leader in that hut she says she has a fuller conception of war's horrors. The boys always enjoyed the singing part of the service, nevertheless. We would pass cards containing a number of well-known hymns, and they would call out the ones they wished to sing. The favorites were " The Son of God Goes Forth to War," " Onward, Christian Soldier," " What a Friend We Have in Jesus," " Trust and Obey," " Rock of Ages," and " Nearer My God to Thee." We always opened the service by standing and singing "America," and always closed with " The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

It was inspiring to hear those men sing these old hymns, and especially as they stood in the dim light of the candles and sang

"I have seen Him in the watchfires
Of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar
In the evening dews and damps.
I have read His righteous sentence
By the dim and flaring lamps—
His truth is marching on."

At the close of the service I had them repeat with me the Lord's Prayer, and they were dis-

missed. On one occasion I had just received a large supply of apples sent from the States, and following the services I handed out these apples " with the love of the folks back home." More than one eye grew misty as they took the little token sent them by the " folks " so far away.

On Washington's birthday a number of school children led by their teacher marched out to the " Y " tent and to the best of their ability honored the occasion by singing *" The Marseillaise."*

A day or two later a number of French boys held a celebration in the village in honor of the fact that they had just been notified that next year they were to be called to the colors. They decorated themselves with gorgeous badges, cheered, sang *" The Marseillaise,"* and marched by the cannon parked in the streets and decorated the grim, camouflaged guns with artificial flowers. And even as they sang the thunder of the fighting was in their ears. Such was the spirit of the youth of France.

One of our " red letter " days was when General Pershing visited the camp. News of his

coming had preceded him, and everything with which the Americans had to do was "manicured" and polished. Then everybody kept a vigilant watch for the coming of the commander-in-chief of the American armies in France. Needless to say, I had the "Y" tent in spick-and-span condition. One of the boys upon entering stopped, stared, and blurted out, "Hell, I'm in a bridal chamber!"

But the Most High did not deign to even glance toward my palace of beauty. Indeed, he scarcely noticed the camp at all. Stopping at headquarters long enough to greet the officers—and to reprimand an unfortunate buck private or two for the heinous offense of not having the heels exactly together and toes pointed out at the proper angle—he then reentered his car, drove at high speed to where the field was being leveled for flying purposes, inspected it, and a moment later was making forty miles an hour away from our camp, followed by the other cars that contained the officers of his staff—and by sighs of relief from the rest of us.

On another occasion the village was honored by a visit from General Petain, of the French army, who inspected the French troops there and decorated a few of them with the *croix de guerre.*

Only occasionally now did I have visits from French soldiers. They spent their leisure hours in the *foyer du soldat,* where I had been located at first. But now and then they came, pleading for American cigarettes or tobacco. They could obtain French cigarettes and tobacco in their own hut, but even the hardy *poilus* were loth to use the stuff if they could get American tobacco and smokes. To sit near a glowing French cigarette was like going through a gas attack.

Attached to the American headquarters in our camp was a French sergeant-pilot, who spoke good English, but who stumbled grievously when he attempted to write it, as will be observed in the following note he sent to me by a French private, asking me to sell him some cigarettes, although he knew it was against the orders of his own government:

March 3, '18.

DEAR SIR:

Could you be kind enough in order to give to the man carring this letter and if it is possible to you, ten packets of cigarettes, of those selded 0fr., 50 each.—I know it is not regular, but it is for the French doctor who cures me.—He has been very kind, and as he goes in *"permission"* to-morrow morning for 10 or 15 days he would like to bring them with, being affraid not to found any tobacco in the interior land.—It would agree me if I could let him have them.

Excuse me to trouble you and believe to my kindest regards, Yours truly,

RILHVINNES.

I still have the note, and give it here with no change in the wording, spelling, or punctuation. He got the cigarettes. Perhaps I ought to explain that his statement of the price "0fr. 50," means "no francs and fifty centimes," the same as if we would write "$00.50," meaning fifty cents. Do not understand me to say that fifty centimes is the same as fifty cents. I am referring to the writing of it. "*Permission*" is the French word for leave of absence.

This brings up the general subject of French money, which every Yank held in supreme contempt. "Soap-wrappers" was his usual designation of the French bills, and he snorted with

disgust because of their flimsiness. The American soldier took no care of these "soap-wrappers," wadding them up in his pocket much as he would a tangle of twine, and they were usually brought out with a scornful jerk that not infrequently tore them to pieces. Then the man at the canteen counter had to get out his gummed paper (made especially for this purpose by the French, an acknowledgment on their part that the money really is flimsy) and carefully patch the torn bills.

The bills above five-franc denominations bore in the lower left-hand corner a certain series number, and the same number in the upper right-hand corner. In piecing together torn bills one had to be careful not to get parts of two different bills mixed. The figures in the lower and upper corners had to correspond, else the bills were worthless.

In every "Y" tent were placards warning the American soldiers to examine patched bills before accepting them in order to be sure that the numbers were correct, and also urging them to be careful in handling the money, but few heeded the advice. They preferred to rail at

the unsubstantial stuff and express uncomplimentary opinions of any one, French or American, who would not accept worthless bills as readily as had the holder of them.

Another cause of vexation on the part of the Yank soldiers was the local money issued by the Chambers of Commerce of different cities and good only in that community. For instance, Toul issued money that was good in Toul—or perhaps might be accepted in some near-by village—but would not be accepted by merchants in Neufchâteau or Nancy. Soldiers moving around over France would get a lot of this local money in change, would be suddenly transferred to some other point and then find that they had a pocketful of worthless local money. Some of this was cardboard, some paper, some aluminum—all sorts and descriptions. The Y. M. C. A. canteens would accept this "junk" and send it to headquarters, whence it would be sent back to the different cities from whence it was issued.

The French money has the franc as its basis, the same as United States money has the dollar. One hundred centimes make one franc, which

is approximately twenty cents, a centime being about the same as one-fifth of one cent. Probably there was a time when they used one-centime pieces in France, but they are not used now. I saw a few one-centime pieces that were being carried as souvenirs, but, generally speaking, the five-centime piece (equalling one cent) is the smallest. These and the ten-centime pieces are of copper, the latter being about the size of the old-fashioned two-cent piece formerly in circulation in the United States.

These French copper pieces were called "clackers" by the American soldiers, who amused themselves by throwing them to the French children, who soon came to regard all *soldats Americaines* as millionaires. The French youngsters also soon learned to solicit these "clackers," the result being that whenever an American soldier appeared, there, too, appeared these children, trotting along beside the Yank and eagerly saying, "*Sou!*" "*Sou!*" The five-centime piece is commonly called a "*sou*" by the French.

Another thing the French children soon learned was that the wonderful beings from the

SAMPLES OF FRENCH MONEY.

Showing different styles of one franc and half-franc (cinquante centimes, or fifty centimes) notes, and in the center some of the "local currency" printed on pasteboard and aluminum. The circular piece shown at the bottom center is a cardboard five-centime piece (one cent in U. S. money), above it is a twenty-centime piece stamped on aluminum, and above it are two twenty-five centime pieces printed on cardboard. This money caused the American soldiers no end of trouble.

world beyond the sea usually had a package or two of gum in their pockets, and the little folks developed an enormous craving for this. So as they trotted along by the Yanks they would usually alternate their "*sou*" plea with one for gum, which they pronounced "gaum," in a peculiarly solemn, deep-throated manner.

But the French children loved the American soldiers for themselves, and not alone for *sous* and gum. The heart of the Yank seemed instinctively to go out to the youngsters, and the average soldier was happiest when he was carrying some child on his shoulders, or in some other way showing kindness to the "kids."

Certain it is that when the present children of France grow to maturity they will hold in their minds loving memories of the men from America.

I am compelled to state, however, that my judgment is that the majority of American soldiers have returned home with resentment in their hearts against the French. Too often the American misunderstood the French morals, as I have said before, but I am not referring to that question now. Neither am I

referring to the way in which the average American soldier viewed everything French through biased American eyes. All of that might yield to time and further analysis. But there is one fact that rankles in the memory of the American soldier and that will not soon change aspect in his mind, and that is the fact that he was shamefully overcharged regularly by the French shopkeepers.

There is no question at all but that a Frenchman could go into a shop and purchase an article at about two-thirds the price that would be charged the American who bought the same article a minute later. This practice became so notorious that the Paris newspapers took cognizance of it and editorially warned France against its continuance. As a matter of fact, semi-official action was taken by French organizations and efforts were made to protect the Americans from this robbery. And the crusade against overcharging had its effect, but never entirely eliminated it.

This practice will never be forgiven by the returning American soldier. It chilled the love for France that most of the boys in khaki took

across the sea with them, and when these soldiers become the leaders of our nation, the arbiters of our country's relations with France, this petty dishonest practice on the part of so many shopkeepers during the great war will still be remembered and resented, and the effect of this memory and resentment is not to be lightly considered. In the great future when matters are being weighed in the balance and America's leaders are trying to determine on which side the hair's weight of evidence lies, the memory of this double-dealing will not tilt the scales in favor of France. A little thing, you may say, and yet matters of less importance have decided the fate of nations.

But in all fairness it must be added that some of the American soldiers themselves were largely responsible for the practice becoming so flagrant. This volume is being written with the sincere desire to be fair and just in all things, and while it is farthest from the writer's desire to minimize this practice of overcharging, he must point out the fact that in the early contingents to reach France—and in the later ones, too, for that matter—there were a large

number of happy-go-lucky boys who threw their money around in a careless and lavish manner, so that the French, accustomed to thrift and conservatism in money matters, were overwhelmed with amazement at the prodigality of the sons of the land beyond the sea, and soon they came to feel that all Americans were rolling in wealth.

Our soldiers were not at all unhappy over the reputation that they soon gained as men of untold riches. They gave extravagant tips (so large that there came a time when Paris papers protested against it, as it embarrassed the French, who could not stand the pace), they threw out handfuls of French money and signaled that the shopkeepers were to take what they wanted, and the remainder was stuffed back into the soldier's pockets without so much as a glance at it. The Yank was having the time of his life playing the "millionaire kid."

The French first gasped in astonishment—and then grasped with avidity.

The American soldiers probably will never forgive the overcharging by the French. But

LA BATAILLE A L'OUEST DE SAINT-QUENTIN. — ALERTE A PARIS

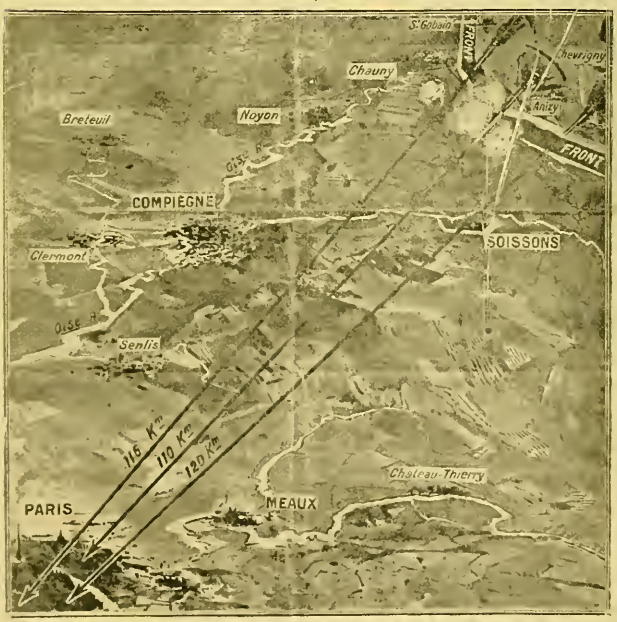
EXCELSIOR

Dimanche 24 MARS 1918

UNE PIÈCE A LONGUE PORTÉE A BOMBARDÉ PARIS HIER

COMMUNIQUÉ OFFICIEL DU SAMEDI 23 MARS, 15 HEURES :

L'ennemi a tiré sur Paris avec une pièce à longue portée. Depuis 8 heures du matin, de quart d'heure en quart d'heure, des obus de 240 ont atteint la capitale et la banlieue. Il y a une dizaine de morts et une quinzaine de blessés. Les mesures pour contre-battre la pièce ennemie sont en voie d'exécution.



THE LONG-RANGE BOMBARDMENT.

Sketch in "Excelsior," issued in Paris Sunday morning, March 24, 1918, showing the location of "Big Bertha," and the course of the shells.

will they condone and wipe from their minds the same thing that was practised on them by many storekeepers in our own country? There were camps in America near cities in which the man in uniform was "held up" for excessive prices, according to repeated complaints of the soldiers. After all, human nature is about the same the world over, and I am wondering how an army of French soldiers would fare in America were they to come over with more money than we were accustomed to seeing and then throw that money around as freely and carelessly as the Yanks did theirs.

Certainly the undoubted fact that we would "take plenty" does not justify their having robbed us. It is simply another case of the beam and the mote—only in this instance both our brother's eye and our own contain beams.

CHAPTER X

OPENING OF BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS

LATE in March my application for a transfer to another post was granted, and as I was worn out physically by my months of service in the field without a day of rest, months when I was working from dawn until late at night, I was ordered into Paris for a few days' rest.

I reached Paris the night of March 21st and when I got to my hotel had a merry little row with the drunken taxi-driver. I mention this because the driver's antics became so ludicrous that I laughed heartily, and rejoiced to find that I had not lost the power of laughter. I had been having a strenuous time in the field, bombed often, working as I had never worked before and never expect to again, and burdened with many responsibilities and cares until I had almost forgotten how to laugh. But now

I rejoiced to find a good " Ha, ha!" coming to my lips.

There is always hope for a man who can laugh, and in a very few nights I was to learn as never before the power of laughter, how it could save one from the grip of terror.

Also I want you to observe the date that I arrived in Paris—Thursday night, March 21, 1918. Do you remember what important war move took place on that date? That was the day when the Germans launched their long-threatened spring drive toward Paris. I knew nothing of this when I left the field. The papers on the morning of March 22nd gave us the first news of the attack.

Another important event connected with March 21st should be recorded. That night I was able to take a plunge in a real bath-tub, the first one in months. Think of it, a bath, and before me a week of freedom from peril and toil! Small wonder that I sighed happily as I stretched out in bed.

'Twas well I had my happiness in that hour, for Tragedy was soon to snatch it from me and make my " rest " a lively one. Within thirty-

six hours one of the most startling events of the war took place, and I was in its maelstrom.

The next night, just twenty-four hours after my arrival in Paris, the Germans put over an air-raid, and the shrieking siren, crashing bombs and roar of the anti-aircraft guns caused me to wonder if, after all, my rest was to be as sweet as anticipation had painted it. But by this time I had grown accustomed to bombs and gunfire, and I gave the affair scant heed. Of course, all lights were out, and one had to grope his way about the hotel in total darkness. But darkness had come to be my usual night surroundings, and I accepted it complacently.

When the raid was over I went to bed and slept sweetly until morning, a day that will be written prominently in the history of the war.

It was Saturday morning, March 23rd—the day when the German long-range cannon, afterward known as "Big Bertha," opened the bombardment of Paris, the most famous bombardment, all things considered, in the history of the world. I heard the first shell that landed in the city, and was an observer of

events during the succeeding days of the first "installment" of the bombardment.

The day dawned cloudless, but during the early hours a haze hung over the city. Weary, I was lying abed late that morning, but was not asleep when at 8:30 an explosion sounded some distance away. Later I learned that the first shell had struck in front of the *gare de l'est* (a railway station), killed the old woman who sold papers there and wounded several.

When I heard the explosion I was surprised and puzzled as to what it could be. A few moments later the fire-engines were tearing through the streets with shrieking sirens—the air-raid alarm. But I could not believe it. Going to the window I looked out and saw the sun shining brightly, no clouds in sight, and the haze lifting. It seemed absurd to think that the Germans could reach Paris in daylight, or that they would even attempt it. I returned to bed.

Presently there came another crash. It was very odd. Going to the window again I looked down and saw people standing in the streets, looking up into the sky. On the little veranda

of the floor below me were several secretaries with upturned faces. I called down and asked if it was a raid, and they replied that it was.

The haze was rapidly lifting. After standing at the window a while I decided to dress, and while doing so I heard another explosion. Fritz certainly was audacious, I thought, to come a-raiding so far over the lines on a cloudless morning.

When I went into the dining-room for breakfast I found the French waitresses in a panic. Another secretary or two came in, and the French girls seemed astonished to think that Americans should think of wishing breakfast while the enemy was bombing us.

"Avions allemands! Avions allemands!" ("German aëroplanes! German aëroplanes!") protested the girl at my table, wringing her hands.

"Oui, oui—avions allemands. Apportez-moi chocolat, du pain, du beurre, et confiture, s'il vous plait," ("Yes, yes—German aëroplanes. Bring me chocolate, bread, butter, and jam, if you please,") I answered.

The girl still wrung her hands. Looking

at me as if undecided as to whether or not I fully understood what was taking place, she tried again to impress me.

"Boom! Boom! Boom!" she exclaimed, throwing up her arms after each "boom." Another crash sounded from some place in the distance. *"Oh, la! la! Oh, la! la!"* She turned and hurried to the kitchen.

After breakfasting I went out into the streets, and found mystery everywhere. Explosives were crashing at regular intervals—every fifteen minutes—and no one could learn whence they came. When the first one struck, the officials had jumped to the conclusion that the Germans had really reached Paris with a daylight air-raid, seemingly the most improbable thing imaginable. What else could it be but an air-raid? Were not explosives falling, and had not falling explosives always come from aëroplanes? Where else could they come from? It must be an air-raid. Thus they argued.

But no one could see or hear any planes except the French scout-planes that soon were racing through the air, searching far

and wide for the enemy. A plane can be heard, even though it be so high as to be almost invisible, and the sharpest ears could not detect the "z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z—z-uz-z-z" of German motors.

All day long this continued, the explosions coming every fifteen minutes and in widely different sections of the city, so that one never knew in what quarter might be heard the next crash that sowed death and suffering. It seemed utterly impossible that planes could hover above the city for so many hours without being found and destroyed by the French air-patrols. And yet, "Crash!" "Crash!" "Crash!" they came almost as regularly as the watches ticked the passing of a quarter of an hour.

The thing was uncanny, and terror gripped the people. The city became a hotbed of rumors, all of them fear-inspiring. Business was suspended almost completely, the subways stopped running, and people flocked to them for shelter, the banks were closed, and but few people were on the streets. One of the most persistent rumors was that the city was full of

spies (which undoubtedly was true), and that these spies were setting off time-bombs as a part of a gigantic plot to blow up the city and spread terror among the people back of the lines while the big drive now taking place hammered the fighting men on the western front.

It was one of the worst days Paris experienced during the war. The mystery of the whole thing got on their nerves. No one knew the source of the bombs or shells—or whatever they were that came so regularly—and no one knew where death might strike next. The explosives did not appear to be especially high-powered, but where they struck, holes were torn in the street, or a wall smashed in, or a roof caved in, and people were being killed by the mysterious something with which the city was being attacked.

Army officers back from the front were as badly puzzled as civilians. That the explosives were not bombs I felt certain. I had heard too many of them " out there " to be fooled on that point. With this the army officers fully agreed. They declared the explosions were

not coming from bombs, but that they had the sound of shells. But this seemed to be utterly impossible. Whence could come a shell that landed in Paris, when the fighting line was then seventy-five miles distant from the city at the nearest point? Clearly impossible.

All day the mysterious attack continued, but at 4:30 in the afternoon the buglers went through the streets sounding the "All clear" signal, proclaiming that the attack was at an end. The population of Paris then crawled out of the *abris* and thronged the streets, discussing the strange bombardment.

When the evening papers were issued they bore the following official *communiqué* (statement):

> "At 8:20 this morning enemy aëroplanes, flying at a great height, succeeded in crossing the lines and attacking Paris. They were immediately chased away by aviators from the Paris camp and those at the front. Several places where bombs have fallen have been reported. There are a few victims."

People read this official statement—and marveled how the enemy had continued to

shower bombs on the city all day after being "immediately chased away," as the *communiqué* declared. Rumors flew faster than ever, and uneasiness deepened. The great German drive was smashing forward in spite of the most desperate resistance by the Allies, and now had come this attack on Paris, an attack that the official bulletin had made itself ridiculous in attempting to explain.

It was the mystery of it that was unnerving the people. What strange and terrible thing had the Germans succeeded in bringing to pass now? Perhaps God was not with the boche, but it looked as if the devil were.

Evening and night came on clear and beautiful, not a cloud in the sky, but a brilliant moon flooding the earth with light. It was an ideal night for an air-raid, and I felt perfectly certain that the enemy would attack with aëroplanes that night, no matter how they had attacked during the day. I had seen many raids while up in the field, but the two raids I had experienced in Paris had found me in my hotel where I had scant chance to study the first reaction of the masses when the alarm sounded.

I determined to pick my observation-point for the raid I was certain would be upon us before many hours. I went out on the streets and finally chose a place near the Opera, on one of the most prominent boulevards of Paris. I located myself in the doorway of a store that was closed for the evening, and waited.

The people seemed unusually light-hearted that night, undoubtedly the nervous reaction of the strain under which they had been during the day. The sidewalks and streets were crowded. The girls of the streets were as busy as bees, plying their immoral solicitations, the moving-picture theatres were crowded, the cafés were doing a rushing business, all of the little tables on the sidewalks being occupied by women and men, among the latter being soldiers of many different nations. Trucks and taxis filled the streets. War seemed an unheard-of thing.

And then suddenly it came!

There was a wild, wailing shriek of a fire-engine siren and the scene changed instantly. It was as if a sudden blow had paralyzed one channel of life and had turned all activity into

another. The expression on the faces changed as quickly as the winking of an eye. Instead of the hint of gayety, there was now "the pallid flag of fear" everywhere. Beneath the paint and powder and other "camouflage" the faces of the girls of the streets became paler than usual. With the first sound of the warning siren they turned from their intended victims and ran pell-mell for shelter.

The sidewalks became congested with wildly hurrying mobs, everybody struggling to get somewhere else in a hurry. Autos and wagons filled the streets, taxis honking desperately to clear for themselves a pathway; men waved canes and arms at taxi-drivers and shrieked offers of bribes to induce the drivers to stop and pick them up. The cafés closed immediately; the drinkers at the little tables on the sidewalks arose and fled, while the waiters hastily piled up the chairs and lowered the protecting shutters. Women shrilled at children; and men, standing and looking upward for a moment, cursed savagely.

The theatres flashed, *"Alerte! Abri!"* ("Quick! Shelter!") The word *"alerte"*

is usually used as meaning an alarm. Immediately the orchestras began playing "*The Marseillaise*" and the audiences poured out into the streets. The siren was still wailing.

Overhead, a wonderful moon smiled down on the scene of pandemonium.

CHAPTER XI

THE TRUTH ABOUT "BIG BERTHA"

IT seemed to me that siren would never still.

I walked along the streets, down the Avenue de l'Opera and the Boulevard des Capucines, studying the scenes of flight and terror. If it is told you that Paris gave no heed to these night-raids, the teller is a mistaken enthusiast. Never a raid came that did not strike terror to the city. It was natural that it should be so. I have faced death in more than one form, but one's utter helplessness in an air-raid emphasizes the fear of death that is an attribute of all human beings—except idiots and liars. One may look into the face of death and remain outwardly calm—even smiling—but that there are those who never know fear I do not for one moment believe. Fear of death is not synonymous with cowardice.

The Metro trains (subways) had again

stopped, and the stations had quickly filled with people seeking shelter; not only the stations, but far into the tunnels the tracks were crowded with men, women and children, the electric power having been turned off, so that there was no danger from the rails.

A group of American soldiers came out of a moving-picture theatre, storming mad because they had paid their money and had not seen much of the show.

"I've been trying for two nights to see that picture," one of them said to me, as we walked down the street together. "Last night they sounded the alarm when I was in there, and I had to beat it. I went back to-night, and the picture got a little farther along, but just as the hero guy grabs his girl and begins to kiss her—zip goes the '*alerte*' and buddy and me had to drill out again to '*The Marseillaise.*'"

A scout-plane roared by overhead again, with its green and white signals blinking messages to those who could read them. The soldiers turned off and I continued my way. An American army officer, a captain, stood on the curb, angrily smiting his puttee with a cane.

Our eyes met. I saluted and smiled at him. He returned the salute and nodded in a very human way.

"Damn them!" he growled. "This makes me tired. I'd rather be back at the front than here."

I said something intended to sympathize and agree with him, for, in truth, it was the experience of most that they preferred the front to the uncertainties of Paris during the raids and bombardments. Out at the front when Fritz put over a raid or bombardment we knew about what he was trying to hit, and we knew where to go and what to do to have the best chance for safety. The Germans simply bombed and shelled Paris at random, murdering in the hope of breaking down the spirit of the French, and one was as apt to run into death as he was to run away from it. The nearest shelter was the best, always, even though the bombs or shells were for the moment falling in another section of the city. In a breath they might be crashing about where one was standing in fancied remoteness from the danger.

"I hate to run from the devils," said the

captain, " but what can a man do with a cane against a bomb? It isn't cowardice to seek shelter as these people are doing. It's the only sensible thing to do."

" Sure," I assented. " I've seen some bombing, and that shrapnel is bad medicine. Shelter is the sensible thing, as you say." I took another look at the sky, and then turned to him again. " But you are still on the curb," I added, significantly.

" Yes," he growled, with a flicker of a smile. " It's because I hate to run from the devils. But it's the sensible thing to do, so I'll take my own medicine. But I'll get even some day."

We saluted each other and he turned and walked away, and I knew that if that captain could have had a chance to lead a company over the top right then he would have yelled for joy.

Back at my hotel, I found a group of secretaries congregated in the street in front, all faces upward, of course. In fact, I began to fear that if the war continued many months longer the back of my head would grow to my spinal column and I would have to get down

on my hands and knees to look straight ahead. By this time we could hear guns and bombs at a distance. I decided to take another ramble.

Over the Church of the Madeleine I could hear the loud drone of a French motor, and as I looked upward I was startled to see a great ball of fire burst out in the sky and go zigzagging and circling around in a crazy sort of way. It was something new to me. Four or five French heads were peeking out of a cellar at the edge of the sidewalk, and I knew enough French to ask, "*Qu'est-ce que c'est?*" ("What is it?") Out of the profuse outpouring of their replies I gathered the information that it was some kind of signal dropped by one of the planes. It did not fall to earth, but went rambling through the air as if guided by a drunken man.

Going back to the boulevards I found them entirely deserted now. No longer were the taxis and wagons dashing through the streets; for long distances one could not see a human being, and heard no voices except the indistinct murmurs coming from cellarways and other places of shelter. Only an occasional roar of bomb or

gun reverberated across the city, and the indications were that the raid had been fought off.

An hour and a half after the alarm had been given, the bugles sounded the "All clear" signal, which was taken up by the church-bells all over the city, a new signal agreed upon to announce the end of a raid, and with the sound of the joyously ringing church-bells in my ears I went to bed and to sleep.

I had told myself that I would take a late sleep the next morning—Sunday. But I didn't. In those days one might decide to do thus or so, but whether or not he ever did it depended largely upon how Fritz acted. And on that morning Fritz willed that I should not sleep.

At seven o'clock that morning, Sunday, March 24th, I was awakened by the same wailing siren alarm. I listened to the siren, but decided that I was doing very well where I was, so I closed my eyes and was just dropping off to sleep when "Bang!" went the opening of the day's bombardment. I stuck to the bed, but fifteen minutes later another explosion sounded rather near—and I decided to get up.

Going into the dining-room for breakfast, I found the waitresses in the usual state of panic, but all this was forgotten when I picked up the morning paper and read that the mysterious attack on Paris the day before—and now beginning again—was not from the air, as had been supposed, but that the city had been bombarded by some marvelous gun firing from a distance of seventy-five miles.

It will be remembered that the first official *communiqué* stated that the city had been attacked by aëroplanes, and that *"they were immediately chased away by aviators from the Paris camp and those at the front."* With that statement in memory one could not but smile a wee bit when he now read the second official *communiqué* concerning the mysterious affair of the day before. The second statement said:

> "The enemy has bombarded Paris with a long-range gun. From eight in the morning, every quarter of an hour, shells fell into the capital and outskirts of the city. There were ten people killed and fifteen injured. Steps have been taken to combat the enemy's long-range gun."

The *communiqués* I have quoted are the official translations of the official statements issued in the French language. The first one stated that " aviators from Paris and the front had chased the enemy away " (even though the explosions continued all day), and the second one admitted that aviators had not chased away any enemy; in fact, admitted that no enemy was near, as the bombardment was coming from a point behind the lines seventy-five miles away.

I should like to remark in passing that this is the only instance I ever discovered where an official statement was false.

The announcement of the true nature of the bombardment we were undergoing was dumfounding. Paris was amazed, and the news that flashed around the world was greeted with incredulity. Paris bombarded from a distance of seventy-five miles? Impossible! Only a Jules Verne mind could invent such a story.

The world said it was one of the canards of the war. Paris was uncertain what to believe. Personally, I was certain of one thing, and that was that the city had not been attacked by

aëroplanes the day before. I had become rather intimately acquainted with bombs and I asserted my conviction that we were not being and had not been bombed, except at night. Those affairs clearly were air-raids.

Obtaining breakfast was again a difficult matter, as the girls were looking anxiously toward the stairs leading to the cellar.

"*Bon jour, Monsieur,*" said the waitress at my table, tremulously, her native politeness asserting itself in spite of her fright. An explosion sounded not far away, reverberating ominously through the dining-room. "*Oh, la! la!*" she exclaimed, clasping her hands. "*Pas avions! Les Allemands avez les gros canons!*" ("Not aëroplanes! The Germans have big cannon!")

"*Oh, la! la!*" is a favorite exclamation with the French. It is so expressive that it hardly needs interpretation.

During my breakfast another shell burst somewhere in the city, but I was comforted by the fact that it was much farther away than the others had been that morning. However, I knew full well that this was no indication that

the next one would not come crashing through the room where I sat.

After breakfasting and writing some letters I started out for a walk over the city to observe the attitude of Paris on this second day of bombardment. To my surprise I found the people in an entirely different state of mind from the day before. The fright of our dining-room waitresses was the only instance that I saw of terror on this second day—or on any succeeding day of the bombardment. Indeed, they seemed to accept it with a calmer spirit than they did the night air-raids.

Yesterday the people were in a panic, unquestionably largely due to the mystery of the attack and the wild rumors that resulted. Today their panic was gone, a state of affairs just as unquestionably due to the fact that the mystery had been removed. It was a terrible crisis they must meet—yes; but after all, it was a cannon that was firing at them, and they understood a cannon. The mystery had been solved. They would face this new form of murder with the same spirit with which they had faced other attacks on their morale.

And so on this Sabbath morning the walks were crowded with people and the streets were filled with traffic while the foe from a point seventy-five miles away poured shells into the city. The day was a perfect one, without a cloud in the sky, the air balmy. The little tables on the walks in front of the cafés were all taken by men, women and children who sipped their drinks and chatted brightly, laughing and shrugging their shoulders when the crash of a shell was heard. One could scarcely believe that the city was undergoing the cruelest and most remarkable bombardment in the world's history.

A noticeable difference between the Paris of that day and the Paris I had first known was that in December the city was filled with American soldiers, while but few were to be seen there now.

As I made my way along, studying the people and the situation in general a shell exploded not far from me with a terrific crash. I felt the ground rock beneath my feet and the beating of violent waves of air against my cheek. I staggered a bit, and then ran toward where

the others were running, to see where the shell had struck. Miraculous as it seems, no one was killed or injured by this explosion. The shell had struck in the corner of some storerooms, had torn out a section of the wall and exploded in the basement, marking adjacent buildings with shrapnel and flying bits from the wreckage, but injuring no one.

As a matter of fact, there is no doubt whatever that this bombardment of Paris was not undertaken with the idea of battering down the city, nor of inflicting heavy casualties on the population. The bombardment was planned and carried out with the design of breaking the nerve of the people, of destroying that almost indefinable something known as " morale."

The shells were not the terrible high-explosive ones, as high explosives were known in the field. They traveled high in the air and descended at a sharp angle, piercing walls, of course, where they struck, or tearing great holes in the street, and death or injury or both usually resulted from their explosions, but, nevertheless, there is no question but that the principal thought of the Germans in opening

fire on Paris was to strike terror. They believed that with the big drive sweeping forward as it was they could conquer the people behind the lines with this amazing bombardment, and that with their victorious armies driving the Allies before them in the field and their long-range cannon pouring shells into the beloved Paris the people would lose their nerve and shriek for an armistice and peace.

The Germans figured thus because they knew full well that such would be the effect upon themselves had conditions been reversed. If any one thing was proven more clearly than any other during the war it was that the Germans could not stand punishment.

They were ready to face almost certain death in massed attacks so long as they were winning; massed together and drawing a kind of courage from this sense of brute power, they were terrible in their war lust. Bombing French cities and villages and gassing unprotected and unsuspecting soldiers afforded them no end of swaggering, brutal pleasure—so long as they had their foe almost helpless before these attacks, as they did in the early period of such

affairs. But a study of the war will prove that in every instance when these things were turned against them the Germans squealed like pigs.

So it was that out of their own natures they conceived the idea that a long-range bombardment would cause terrorized pleas for mercy, and this, of course, meant an armistice and a German peace.

But the French did nothing of the kind. The air-raids struck terror to the city—yes; the mystery of the bombardment plunged Paris into a panic the first day—yes; the succeeding days of the bombardment brought with them their measure of terror—yes; but the spirit of the French could not be crushed by the death that flew by night or that came crashing out of clear skies by day. They gritted their teeth and smiled while the shells and bombs fell all about them.

And out there in the fighting lines the gallant *poilus,* hearing of the bombardment of their beloved Paris, fought the more determinedly, resisting foot by foot the crushing onrolling masses of the enemy, and dying with

their last breaths still gasping in defiance, "*Ils ne passeront pas!*" ("They shall not pass!").

True it is that in those days many thousands of people fled from Paris. Men sent their wives and children out of the city for safety, and thousands of men left, also. Why not? Why should one remain and tempt death if there were no need for it? Night and day death held carnival in the city, and there was every indication that the situation would grow worse instead of better. There was no thought of crying, "Enough!" No one suggested that it was time to ask the foe for peace terms. Thousands left the city for places of safety, but the morale of the French was unbroken, and there was only one thought—to endure and fight on.

During the weeks that followed, this big gun was the weapon of some atrocious murders. The two that aroused the most indignation and horror throughout the civilized world were the striking of the Church of St. Gervais and the striking of a *crèche* (a maternity hospital) on April 12th.

The Church of St. Gervais was struck by a

German shell on March 29th, Good Friday, during the services. Seventy-five persons were killed and ninety were wounded, many of the deaths and injuries being due to the collapsing of portions of the church and not to the victims having been killed by the shell itself. Of course, this did not lessen the guilt of the Germans, but accounts for the unusual number of deaths from one shell. Of those killed in this church, fifty-four were women.

This aroused such indignation that the Pope sent a protest to Berlin.

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Perhaps this slaughter of new-born babes created more horror than did any other result of the "Big Bertha" bombardment.

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written and published in June, long after the opening of the bombardment, but while it was still proceeding, spasmodically.) The writer declared that if it should be necessary, Krupp's Works, which constructed these guns, could make others. "However," he added, "only the number of guns absolutely necessary will be constructed, owing to the enormous requirements and difficulties entailed."

Continuing, he wrote:

"Many of the particulars given by the French concerning the gun are near the truth. Naturally the gun has a very long bore, because a certain time must elapse before the shell can acquire the abnormal initial velocity necessary to carry it rapidly through the atmosphere into space. The final velocity is probably greater than in the case of other shells, but is less than its own initial velocity. To make the shell travel through as little air as possible the gun is inclined at the greatest possible angle.

"The layman probably imagines that owing to the enormous initial velocity the shell will be made red hot by the friction of the air. Such is not the case. The cooling effect of the air prevents it, and at the great height reached by the shell a very low temperature prevails.

Calculations made on meteors by astronomers have given indications of atmospheric conditions at great heights, and these have served as a basis for the calculations of 'the Paris gun.'

"The gun is not only the result of science, but also more particularly of the experience of several decades and of experiments with raw materials and labor which only a single firm, Krupp's, could put at the service of the Fatherland. The circumstances which have contributed to the invention are so numerous that it is impossible for the enemy easily and rapidly to imitate it. There are also many scientific factors which can only be determined by long trials. The gun is not so colossal as fancy often depicts it."

In conclusion the writer stated that the gun was invented by Professor Rausenberger, a major in the reserve of the Saxon army. His efforts were ably seconded by Krupp's with its engineers and workmen and by Admiral Rogge, of the German Admiralty, who directed the trials. Lastly, it was stated, Captain Wiegand, a General Staff officer, was responsible for placing the gun in position and for the measures of protection and defense.

That the above statements in the German

illustrated weekly were true is quite probable. Nothing has ever been made public concerning "Big Bertha," as the gun soon became known, that would refute the article by the Baron. The name "Big Bertha" was bestowed upon the gun because it was immediately recognized that it must have been made by the Krupp Works, owned by Bertha Krupp.

On April 21, 1918, a little less than a month after the opening of the bombardment, the London *Daily Mail* published the following:

"Sir Robert Hadfield, at the Society of British Gas Industries, showed specimens of steel—parts of one of the shells fired by the Germans into Paris—which had been in the air at a height of twenty miles. The weight of the shell, he said, was estimated at 350 pounds. In order to get the enormous range required the muzzle velocity of the shell must be about 4,600 foot-seconds, and the pressure inside the gun was about twenty-eight tons per square inch. At the muzzle of the gun a shell at that velocity would perforate six feet of wrought iron, or about fifty-four inches of mild steel, and when the shell left the gun it would have locked up in it as much energy as our fifteen-inch shell. There was nothing ex-

traordinary in this accomplishment, as we had guns of double the energy, and the late Sir Andrew Noble produced a velocity of 5,000 foot-seconds."

Thus one gets some scientific information concerning the remarkable gun that on this March morning was startling the civilized world—and shaking the ground beneath my feet.

CHAPTER XII

THE POWER OF A LAUGH

THE bombardment of Paris continued that day, Sunday, until about 1:30 in the afternoon, and then the shelling ceased.

At 3:40 the buglers went through the streets sounding the "All clear" signal, though I wondered how the officials could determine that a gun hidden seventy-five miles away was going to "stay stopped." My guess was that because no shells had fallen for about two hours it was concluded—as a bit of mere conjecture—that the Germans had ceased firing for the day.

That mine was not a wild guess was proven when at six o'clock that evening the Germans sent two more shells into the city. I have no doubt whatever that the Germans were smart enough to believe that after a few hours of silence the French would decide that the bom-

bardment was ended for the day and would sound the "All clear" signal, and so as a bit of mockery they sent the two into the city at six that evening.

Unquestionably the Germans wished to instill as much uncertainty as possible into the French mind. They were psychologists enough to realize that a set program of shelling would not have the demoralizing effect that an irregular bombardment would have. Thus it was that as the days and weeks went by the bombardment would take place for a day or two at a time at irregular intervals (after the first two days) after which it would cease for perhaps one day, perhaps two days, perhaps a week. Then it would open again, unexpectedly. For a time they shelled the city at night. As a result of this uncertainty the nerve strain was continuous and far more telling than it would have been had the enemy been regular in his shelling.

I was in my room in the hotel when the "All clear" signal sounded that Sunday afternoon, and I went to the window and looked out. Below me I could see people clapping their

hands, while in the streets children joined hands and circled about, singing happily. There was a time when I would have smiled at their demonstrations of joy, but I had had enough experience with bombs and shells by this time to rob me of any inclination to smile, except in relief. Indeed, I felt more like joining in the handclapping and the songs of the children. It was a wonderful relief to be freed from the sound of those shells and to feel that for a few hours, at least, there would be no more attacks.

What a strange feeling it was, to be shelled by an enemy seventy-five miles away, an enemy that it would require the fastest railroad train an hour and a half or two hours to reach!

"Well, that one missed me," one would say to himself as a shell or bomb exploded. "I wonder if ——?" And in the "if" there was uncertainty. One never knew where the next one would hit.

That the city would be subjected to an air-raid that night I did not doubt, as the sky remained cloudless. However, with the exception of the two shells that fell about six

o'clock there was no alarm after the "All clear" signal had sounded until—but that is getting a little ahead of my story.

The evening passed without incident, although we momentarily expected a raid. But even without an attack our spirits were not gay, for the evening dispatches had brought grave news of the smashing success of the German drive. That day the Huns had driven forward in a way that boded ill for the Allies. This was the fourth day of the drive, and it seemed impossible to stop them. Despondency was our lot that Sunday evening.

Ten o'clock came, and no raid, so I decided to go to bed and get what sleep I could. I had come into Paris for a rest, but so far rest had been denied me, as I had been routed out of bed each night by air-raids and had been shelled each day but one since arriving in the city.

I was worn out with my field work, my defective-heart inheritance from my Spanish War days was showing signs of trouble, my nervous system was badly run down, and I needed rest. Evidently Fritz would not be over to-night, so I entered the little auto-

matic electric lift, pushed a button and was taken to the floor on which my room was located.

May I remark in passing that it seemed to me that these "lifts," as the elevators are called in France, and also in the British Isles, are well named. At least most of those in France are, for as a rule they will carry only four, and people are forbidden to ride down. One rides up, but he must come down by the stairway. I do not understand the mechanical construction sufficiently to explain the reason, but I know that placards forbade using the lifts for descent. A touch on a button, of course, sends them down.

Soon I was asleep, but in the midst of dreams of home I was awakened by the heavy anti-aircraft guns. "Boom!" "Boom!" "Boom!" they roared out into the night. I snapped on the light and looked at my watch. It was ten minutes till one.

"Crash!" came the unmistakable explosion of a bomb. Then "R-r-oo-oo-m-b—crash!" came another much nearer, followed in a moment by others, interspersed with the thunder

of the ground batteries in action. We were being raided again.

At the same time the usual wail of the siren was heard in the streets, but this time the raiders seemed to have reached the city before being discovered, so that the siren was not needed. The bombs and shells were doing their own advertising. But the engines raced through the streets as usual.

"There goes Paul Revere once more," I remarked to my roommate, a secretary occupying another single bed in the room. He growled in return.

"B-oo-oo-m!" "Crash!" "R-r-oo-oo-m-b!" The guns and bombs were raising a pretty row. "O-ee-e-e-e-ow-ee-oo-o-o-ee-ow-ee!" shrieked the siren.

Why not tell the truth now, as I have told it all through this volume? I was scared—scared "green," to use an expression common with us over there. I had slept just long enough for my nerves utterly to relax; my vitality was at its lowest ebb; I was worn and frazzled in strength and had been sent here to rest and recuperate. I had undergone the

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I wiped the perspiration from my cold brow; I thought of home and loved ones, and wished that I were back there once more. Doesn't Kipling have Tommy Atkins say, "I ain't no bloomin' 'ero"? I am not positive that he

does, but if Kipling doesn't say it let me do so. I " ain't." Just then I didn't want to be any " bloomin' 'ero," either. I had no desire for *croix de guerre* or any other kind of decoration for valor. I wanted that siren to be still; I wanted the bombing to cease; I wanted the Germans to go away; I wanted peace and safety—and plenty of them.

I felt that my time had come, and I found myself wondering whether I would be blown to bits by the bombs or merely crushed to death by the collapse of the building. My roommate was up and dressing, but I decided to lie still and die in bed.

" Aren't you going to get up? " he asked.

" No," I answered. " No, I think I'll stay where I am."

" Oh, get up and die with your boots on," he said, in jest. But the bantering was entirely without relish for me, even though I jested in return. The fact that I did so is certain proof that a man can laugh and joke even though he be in great terror, for I know that I was as badly frightened as any man could be—and yet my pride forced me to con-

ceal it by joking with my companion. Perhaps he was as fear-struck as I. Who knows? Poor fellow. Six weeks later he was terribly wounded by shell-fire while serving in the field.

Finally I decided to get up, also. But while I was dressing I was still in the grip of the terror that had seized me. Now and then the building seemed to quiver with the shock of the exploding bombs.

The hotel where I was stopping was the Gibraltar, a hotel for "Y" secretaries exclusively—for the newly arrived men awaiting assignment to the field, and for those back on rest periods. Upon retiring at night we always placed our shoes in the hallway beside our door to be polished, as is the custom with all French and other European hotels.

Another thundering roar close at hand, and with my heart trying to jump out of my mouth I opened the door and reached out to get my shoes. As I did so I glanced down the hallway, and here and there from other doorways I saw other arms grabbing frantically for shoes. The scene struck me as extremely ludicrous—one o'clock in the morning, bombs crashing,

their last breaths still gasping in defiance, "*Ils ne passeront pas!*" ("They shall not pass!").

True it is that in those days many thousands of people fled from Paris. Men sent their wives and children out of the city for safety, and thousands of men left, also. Why not? Why should one remain and tempt death if there were no need for it? Night and day death held carnival in the city, and there was every indication that the situation would grow worse instead of better. There was no thought of crying, "Enough!" No one suggested that it was time to ask the foe for peace terms. Thousands left the city for places of safety, but the morale of the French was unbroken, and there was only one thought—to endure and fight on.

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NENETTE AND RINTINTIN.
The mascots that were supposed to protect Parisians from bombs and shells.

THE GARE DE L'EST.
The railway station in front of which the first shell struck when "Big Bertha" opened fire on Paris.

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"Aren't you going to get up?" he asked.

" No," I answered. " No, I think I'll stay where I am."

" Oh, get up and die with your boots on," he said, in jest. But the bantering was entirely without relish for me, even though I jested in return. The fact that I did so is certain proof that a man can laugh and joke even though he be in great terror, for I know that I was as badly frightened as any man could be—and yet my pride forced me to con-

ceal it by joking with my companion. Perhaps he was as fear-struck as I. Who knows? Poor fellow. Six weeks later he was terribly wounded by shell-fire while serving in the field.

Finally I decided to get up, also. But while I was dressing I was still in the grip of the terror that had seized me. Now and then the building seemed to quiver with the shock of the exploding bombs.

The hotel where I was stopping was the Gibraltar, a hotel for "Y" secretaries exclusively—for the newly arrived men awaiting assignment to the field, and for those back on rest periods. Upon retiring at night we always placed our shoes in the hallway beside our door to be polished, as is the custom with all French and other European hotels.

Another thundering roar close at hand, and with my heart trying to jump out of my mouth I opened the door and reached out to get my shoes. As I did so I glanced down the hallway, and here and there from other doorways I saw other arms grabbing frantically for shoes. The scene struck me as extremely ludicrous—one o'clock in the morning, bombs crashing,

with cups of chocolate or coffee, call to them to help themselves while we were busy getting cigarettes or something for fellows at another part of the line, and we never worried about the money.

They would grab for those things like a lecturer for a press notice, but when the bugle sounded again for the advance they would throw their money on the counter, and all one had to do was to ask, "What did you have?" and they would tell us—tell us every crumb they had taken. The American soldier was square.

And, too, it was at this station that I first began to feel confident of the final victory of the Allies. It was my observation of the American soldier that brought to me this confidence that was never afterward shaken. From out of the chaos of hate and horror and degradation I had looked for something that would overcome the gloom that was continually forcing itself upon any one who tried to gauge not by what one hoped but by what one found through close observation and analysis. I am not an enthusiast. I am more prone to ques-

tion and analyze than I am to hurrah. But soon after my arrival at this post confidence and its comfort came to me.

It was on the evening of March 30th, and the boys of the Twenty-sixth (Yankee) Division were the ones who brought to my soul the conviction that when the war ended—whether that should be soon or after long years, no one knew—it would find the stars in Old Glory brighter than ever before because of the valor of the American soldier.

It was a murky, rainy, windy day, and dusk came early. The Twenty-sixth had been in the trenches around Soissons and had seen something of the stern realities of war—nothing compared to what they were to know later, but still enough to rob them of any illusions. After a period of service in that sector they had been ordered back to rest billets, but just as they had started back after being relieved the Germans launched their big drive. Immediately the Twenty-sixth Division was ordered to return to the trenches, not to the Soissons sector, but to the Toul sector.

Part of the division had barely gotten back

to their rest camp while other units of the division had not reached that happy place when the orders came to return to the fighting line. Immediately the Twenty-sixth started for the trenches once more.

It was at the close of that dreary March day when I saw these boys going forward to the battle line. I stood at a cross roads and watched them. They came over a little hill, down into a valley, and then up the hill, along the winding road, going forward in the rain and cold and wind and deepening shadows, going forward to where the guns were thundering and death was waiting to keep tryst with them, going forward stout-hearted and smiling and cheerful.

They had been on the way since before dawn; they must have been weary and soaked and chilled, but I vow before God that they went on and on and on without a whine, on and on and on into the deepening gloom, on and on and on with an occasional burst of song, the artillerymen sitting their mounts as jauntily as if such misery were a thing to be smiled at.

And as I watched those splendid lads I felt

a new joy in my soul, something spoke to the gloom and despondency that had been mine and they were gone, never to return. I had groped for the light in the darkness of war. I found it that March evening, and I knew in that hour that when the great test came, as I knew it must soon come now, the American soldier would be found worthy of all the best traditions of his ancestors, worthy of the prayers and warmest hopes of those across the sea who were by his side in spirit.

I went back to my little room and wrote in my diary: *"An army like that can never be whipped."*

As the weeks went by and I saw more and more of the American soldier in times of great trial my conviction deepened and my admiration for his sterling qualities grew. May God direct us and give us such strength of will that as a nation we shall never prove unworthy of those who so greatly honored and so valorously served us!

CHAPTER XIV

THE YANK AND HIS ALLIES

LIKE most French towns, Neufchâteau is a place of much historical interest. Through its streets had marched Attila, depicted by Dante as " the scourge of earth "; here, too, had come Julius Cæsar with his Roman legions; and in after years Joan of Arc, Savior of France, whose natal village of Domremy was but a few miles distant, had visited here with kinsfolk.

As ours was division headquarters hut there were always from ten to twenty " Y " secretaries in the town, some of them working in this hut, some at the warehouse, some of them truck-drivers, and others newly arrived men to be assigned posts in the area. The result was that the feeding problem was no light one. To meet this need, " Billy," as Levere was known throughout that entire section, established a secretaries' mess in the hut, where dinner and

supper were served, it being necessary for the secretaries to hustle as best they could for breakfast.

This secretaries' mess gave us a splendid chance to provide for the canteen more bountifully than could otherwise have been done, and the good lady—the wife of a major of American Engineers serving at the front—who was in charge of this mess never lost an opportunity to see that this dining-room arrangement benefited the soldiers. She was one of the most devoted women I ever knew. No longer young, her hair white, she worked from early morning until far into the night, denying that she was weary, happy in being able to do something for the boys in khaki.

Assisting us was a young English lady, a girl whose brother and fiancé had been killed in the war. She had come out from London to do her bit as best she could, and joined us as auto-driver and canteen assistant. She was an expert driver as well as a jewel in culinary affairs, besides being possessed of that invaluable trait so often asserted as being lacking in the English—a keen sense of humor.

There came a Sunday when we had a large number of secretaries with us, and as a special treat that day we were to have bread-pudding for dinner, a dainty that our white-haired "Mother" often prepared for the soldiers but always forbade to the secretaries. Large pans of it were made for the fighting men, but not a taste were we ever allowed. But on this Sabbath day the secretaries were to be permitted to share the privileges of the soldiers and have bread-pudding.

The English girl was helping in the preparation of the dinner and to her had been assigned the duty of making the sauce for the pudding. Noon came, and the secretaries came pouring in from a near-by post where they had been at work erecting a hut (yes, we labored on the Sabbath), each keenly hungry and each rejoicing in the news that they were to have bread-pudding, the you-may-see-and-serve-but-mustn't-touch delicacy.

Just as they were filing into the little dining-room the English girl signaled me into the kitchen.

"Something's wrong with this sauce," she

exclaimed anxiously. "I think I must have too much flour in it. See what you think of it."

I examined it. "Too much flour" was the correct diagnosis. It was little else than paste. The girl was skilled in cookery, but she had never before essayed a sauce like this, and now that her efforts had met with disaster she knew not what to do.

"Strain it," I advised. "Get as much of the flour as possible out of it, and pour in more milk."

"Of course, I can strain it," she assented, "and I can pour in the milk, but it will not be much of a sauce that way."

I did my best thinking for a moment and then unfolded a plan.

"Strain out the flour, pour in the milk and then douse it with vanilla until the taste of this extract makes them forget everything else about the sauce. We'll serve it with a flourish, telling them that this is a very special treat, a sauce known as 'The Queen's Own,' and then we'll explain that at a recent function held in London for the benefit of wounded English soldiers Queen Alexandra's favorite sauce

recipe was sold at auction and afterward published in the London papers—and this is the sauce."

She looked at me a moment with widening eyes, and then burst into a perfect gale of laughter.

"Wonderful!" she exclaimed. "We'll do it."

And we did. At the proper time the pudding was served, and then the English girl came in with the sauce. She had refused to do the explaining, so as she entered the dining-room with the crock of sauce she paused and looked toward me. I made the desired speech, explaining about "The Queen's Own" sauce, and I saw her lips twitching as she desperately fought back the laughter that was about to overwhelm her.

The explanation was a success—surprisingly so. Among the secretaries was a certain effusive gentleman whom we all called "Vesuvius," because he was a talking volcano always in eruption. He never lost an opportunity to break in on affairs with a burst of speech, and "The Queen's Own" sauce gave him a cue. Hardly

had I ended my explanation until " Vesuvius " was on his feet, his hand upraised. Then he made a very beautiful little speech of appreciation of the spirit—the loving, thoughtful spirit, the spirit that was doing so much to bind America and England in still closer understanding and sympathy—that had prompted this charming daughter of Britain to serve us with this delicious sauce, the favorite of that beloved lady, Queen Alexandra, " whose health I now propose that we drink in pure, sparkling water."

So they arose and drank the Queen's health in " pure, sparkling water." At least, it was water. But it had been heavily medicated to kill the germs, and it didn't sparkle so that one could notice it. Then the sauce was served, and at the conclusion of dinner Miss Underwood was complimented by all on the deliciousness of the concoction. After all, it proved once more the wonderfulness of the mind, what imagination can do for one.

My duties in this hut kept me busy from six in the morning until ten or eleven o'clock at night, and then not infrequently I was called out

of my bunk during the night to minister to passing detachments. But finally I was asked to add lecturing to my other work, and gladly gave what services I could in this respect. The result was that I drove all over that section of France and lectured in nearly every American camp there. I would work in the canteen as long as my time would permit and then would drive to the designated camp, speak to the men, drive back to my hut, get what sleep I could and be out of bed at six in the morning ready to hand out hot chocolate, cigarettes, cookies, etc.

It was a strenuous life I was leading, but I was willing to keep at it if my strength permitted. Others were doing the same thing. College professors, ministers, and lawyers worked in the warehouse all day long, unloading cars, handling hut-timber, carrying and piling huge boxes of supplies, and then in the evening, sometimes without supper, they would start out to visit other camps on a speaking tour, returning late at night for a little rest before the new day called them to the warehouse and freight cars once more. We usually started with two or three speakers in a car, the

men being dropped here and there at different camps, and then picked up again when the car started back after the lecture at the farthest point.

On dark, rainy nights—and most of the nights were dark and rainy at that time—it was no easy task and certainly not a cheerful one to make one's way around over roads that ran in all directions and twisted and curved all over the country. The little villages were all very much alike. The streets were narrow and crooked, no sidewalks, the house and stable were all under one roof, so that nothing but walls—and oftentimes defective walls—separated the family from the cows, the horses, the sheep, and the chickens. Always when the stables were cleaned the manure was piled out in the front—not in the rear. I have heard people say that they could not believe this statement. Pick up almost any picture of a French village and you will find the manure-piles in front of the homes.

When it rains and the weather grows a bit warm the results are not pleasing to an American nose. At night no lights were permitted

in the villages; the windows must be heavily shuttered and curtained lest a ray of light escape and serve as a guide for Fritz, flying overhead with his bombs ready to be dropped. But, to tell the truth, I could never understand why it was necessary to keep those towns dark, for I know full well that any German flying ten thousand feet above the earth could smell one of those French villages. Darkness would not baffle him.

Often I visited camps of colored troops, and I enjoyed these visits to the utmost. There was always a welcome in evidence and a spontaneous humor that did much to cheer one, even though the colored boys had not intended to be humorous. The "Y" huts for colored troops were just the same as the huts for the white soldiers. In some colored camps white secretaries were in charge of the huts, and in others colored secretaries had charge.

One rainy night I visited a camp of colored engineers employed in some construction work near the front. It was such a night as would take the joy out of any set of men, and I found these negroes congregated in the dimly lighted

hut, listening to the rain and the guns, and very despondent. I mingled with them and chatted as gayly as I could, trying to strike a "lead" by which I could particularly interest them and cause them to forget their present dejection. Nearly every one wanted to talk to me about "home."

"Where are you fellows from?" I asked one sorrowful looking chap.

"Well, suh," he replied, "we're from about everywhar—except from France." Then his face suddenly beamed as he added: "And, boss, I suhtenly does hope that we'll soon be from France!"

I shared his hope, and events proved that the colored soldiers did well their part in making it possible for the American troops to be "from France" long before we dreamed of in those days. The record of our colored soldiers in France is one of which their race and our nation may well be proud. Of course, there were instances with them the same as there were with soldiers of other races when some small group did not show any wild desire to rush into danger. One of these instances came under my ob-

servation, and I relate it because it illustrates the humor of the race that is continually manifesting itself.

A detachment of colored soldiers—laborers who had been sent over by the draft law—was at work at a point not far from the front lines when it became necessary to have an important piece of work done in the trenches. A call was sent for some of the colored laborers, and it was decided—as only a few were needed—to ask for volunteers. But not a one of them stepped forward, and it was necessary to detail a squad.

A few days later while I was in the camp the secretary in charge of the hut there spoke to one of the soldiers about the incident.

"Didn't you volunteer to go up to the front?" asked the secretary.

"No, suh, Mistah Secretary, I didn't volunteer to go up to no front," replied the darkey. He started to walk away, and then turned back and added emphatically: "I tell you, Mistah Secretary, I didn't volunteer to come over here."

Up in the trenches the boys used to be fond

of telling of when a number of colored soldiers were caught in their first bombardment. After several shells had gone whistling over one of the darkeys turned to another and asked:

"Sam, don't you think it's about time you jined the church?"

"Huh!" answered Sam, rolling his eyes as another shell screamed, "I done jined when that first one come over."

While stationed at Neufchâteau I came in contact with a great many wounded English soldiers. They discovered the English girl in our hut, found that she was willing to make tea for them, and so the hut would be visited by numbers of these Tommies each afternoon. No need to ask what they wanted. It was always the same thing—tea.

The English and the American soldiers were beginning to mellow toward each other, now that the big battle was on and each had seen the other tested. During the earlier days of the American stay in France the Tommies and the Yanks had not taken to each other in an excessively enthusiastic manner, even though the aëro squadrons where I was first stationed

always extended every hospitality to the British who had been bombed out of their camp.

The British soldier resented the fact that America had remained out of the war so long, and further resented the attitude assumed by some Americans of having come over to "finish the war." They regarded our soldiers as braggarts and meddlers, whose participation in the war might serve to prolong the affair somewhat, but would not have any other material effect. From this statement you may judge that the British did not expect an Allied victory. I am confident that at the time I refer to, the dawning of the year 1918, the average British soldier did not expect to win. Neither did they expect a German victory. They were convinced that the war was a draw, that it might have been won had America come in two years before, but now all that America could do would be to drag the miserable thing along a little longer, prolonging the suffering and increasing the deaths. Our men were not highly regarded by the British.

On the other hand, the British were held in considerable contempt by the Americans. The

boys from the new world, full of energy and confidence, believed that the British had been too slow and conservative, that they were more inclined to sit down and take tea and talk things over than they were to fight. And the average American soldier was not at all backward in letting his opinions be known.

Added to this condition was the undoubted fact that the British and French were jealous of each other, and remained so to the end of the war. These things, apparent to any one whose eyes were capable of seeing beyond the superficial, were a heavy handicap to the Allied cause.

The Canadians, Australians, and Americans became friends immediately. Their philosophy of life is much the same. All three are men reared in the atmosphere of energy and endeavor, men whose ancestors forsook the conservatism of England and boldly faced new and great tasks. And the soldiers from these three countries were strongly marked with these characteristics. True to form, as the American soldier disliked the reserved, conservative attitude of the British soldier, so, too,

did the Australian and the Canadian dislike the English Tommy's ways.

Events proved, also, that true to form, the American, Australian, and Canadian soldiers fought with the same daring, the same dash and smashing energy, the same spirit of wade-in-and-whip-them-quickly. But when the final test came the soldiers of the different Allied nations learned that all were worthy, each fighting true to his racial characteristics. The drawling English officer who had so disgusted the Yank by his swagger-stick, monocle, and apparent fastidiousness, demonstrated that his courage was equal to his pink-tea manners as he calmly walked forward at the head of his men, leading them across a shell-swept and bullet-drenched field still carrying his swagger-stick, and dying as gamely as any of our more demonstrative Americans.

In the January days of 1918, however, many of these things had not been learned by the Americans, nor by the British and French concerning the Americans. The Australians and Canadians had promptly accepted the Yanks at their full value, because they understood them.

Let me say, too, that the Scots and the Americans were firm friends. The Scots were daring fighters, and "Jock" and "Yank," as they called each other, were good cronies at all times.

But the one thing above all others that won the war was the decision of the Allies to unify the supreme command. Had they not done this I believe that without question the Germans would have battered their way to victory. But when all of the armies of all of the Allies were put under one command, jealousies were thrust into the background and success was assured in a short time. Previous to that the French had fought whenever they chose, and at such points in their lines as they chose, irrespective of what the British or Italians or others were doing. The British did the same, only scant support being received by either army from the others, with the result that all Germany had to do was to whip them one at a time. With Foch in supreme command, all of this was changed. Whenever he struck a blow at one point, every soldier in all of the Allied armies was doing just what Foch wished

done to give that attack the best chance of success.

The philosophy of the thing was very simple —yet it took the Allied nations three years and a half and cost them many hundreds of thousands of lives—and almost defeat—to learn the lesson. National jealousies are responsible for legions of graves in Flanders fields.

CHAPTER XV

JOAN OF ARC'S BIRTHPLACE

ONE of the most delightful days I spent in that section of France was devoted to a visit to the little village of Domremy, where Joan of Arc was born.

This is no place for a biography of the Maid, but many readers will be interested in knowing something about her birthplace. The house in which she was born, January 6, 1412, is still standing and is the shrine before which all of France bows.

The village now has a population of perhaps 200 souls. It is located between Toul and Neufchâteau on the dividing line between the departments of the Vosge and the Meuse. The French pronunciation of the village name always reminded Yank soldiers of their early singing lessons in school, "Do-re-mi," and so it was almost universally thus pronounced, the only error in this pronunciation being that the

first " m " should be slightly sounded instead of being dropped altogether.

Domremy is not on a railroad. But I left the little French train at the village of Maxey one April morning and walked across the hills about a mile and a half to the native village of the Maid of Orleans. As I walked down the streets of Domremy it seemed to me that they could be but little changed from what they were in the days when Joan roamed there. Like most French villages of the Lorraine country the streets were narrow, crooked, and dirty, with no sidewalks.

Along a street came a great two-wheeled cart drawn by two plodding oxen, and with the peasant driver plodding beside the oxen, his wooden shoes clumping heavily. I came to a spacious yard surrounded by an iron fence—an unusual thing in France, where all fences are of stone—the yard being dotted with flower-beds and trees. I entered and stood before a shed-like building of stone and a material resembling stucco. I was standing before the shrine of France, the house wherein was born the peasant girl who was to crown Charles VII

King of France and redeem her country from the bondage of the English. In a niche over the doorway was a facsimile of a statue of the Maid presented by Louis XI.

I opened the heavy plank door and entered. The interior of the house is much the same today as it was when the Maid lived there. There has been something done in the way of restoration, but many of the original timbers are still to be seen, the deeply worn stones of the floor are the same that her feet trod, the old fireplace before which the child so often lay at nights while listening to the tales of war and of France's sorrows as related by passing strangers still remains; in her bedroom is carefully preserved a portion of the chest in which her clothes were kept. The tiny, cell-like rooms have not been changed, and from them one looks out at the hills that she knew and loved five hundred years ago.

Just across the street from the house I visited the little village church where Joan worshiped daily—for she was a very devout maid—and in which is still to be seen the baptismal font used at the christening of the child.

Birthplace of Joan of Arc.
The house in which she was born in Domremy.

Street in Domremy.
The village in which Joan of Arc was born January 6, 1412.

If you study the life of Joan of Arc you will learn that it was from a corner of this church that she first heard the Voices. It was in the middle of a summer's day when she was in her garden that she suddenly saw a great light coming from the corner of this church and heard a voice calling her thrice, "Jeanne d'Arc!" "Jeanne d'Arc!" "Jeanne d'Arc!" Thus it is the French spell and pronounce her name, the pronunciation being as if the name were spelled "Zshon Dark." It seems a pity to use such a spelling in order to get the French pronunciation, but I know of no better way to set it forth. She said that when the voice spoke she looked toward the light and saw St. Michael, chief of the armies of heaven, who held a flaming sword in his hand. Then it was that she was first told that she was to save France.

I walked on through the village and out toward the spot where the old Fairy Tree stood. This was a wide-spreading beech, and it has properly been said that it could as well have been called The Children's Tree, for it was under this Fairy Tree that the children of

Domremy were wont to gather and sing their songs while they clasped hands and circled about it. Beneath this tree the fairies were supposed to hold carnival while mortals slept. And, too, here was where Joan heard many of her Voices and saw her visions.

The road from the village winds along beside the little river Meuse, a stream not much larger at that point than most American creeks. The day was a delightful one, the hillsides splashed with the gorgeous coloring of the wild-flowers, the air balmy, the river faintly murmuring. Even the big guns over on the Lorraine front were stilled for the time being. It was the Valley of Peace, the abode of the Past.

Close beside the road I passed a grave, fenced in, and rising above it was the usual figure of Christ on the Cross. About half a mile from the village I came to the spot I sought, the site of the Fairy Tree, now marked by a magnificent memorial church erected by the Republic of France in honor of the Maid. The church stands close beside a remnant of what was in Joan's day a great forest wherein dwelt a terrible dragon. So greatly did the

peasants fear this monster that now and then they had the local priest perform certain mystic ceremonies at the edge of the forest for the purpose of driving away the beast. Surely no one can doubt the power of the exorcism, for no record can be found of the dragon ever having hurt any one.

The memorial church is a magnificent edifice with spire rising high above the valley. In front on one side is a figure representing the Maid's father, Jacques d'Arc, resting on his plow, and on the other side is a figure representing her mother, Isabelle (Romee) d'Arc, sitting by her distaff. Within the church are several paintings, large masterpieces, depicting important events in the life of Joan.

Standing on the steps of this church I could look down into and across the Valley of the Meuse, threaded by the little river like a tracing of silver. Here and there flocks were grazing, and as I mused it seemed that the centuries were rolling away and that the little peasant girl must appear.

As I started back toward the village a sullen, rumbling " boo-oo-m " came floating across the

hills. It was the voice of Hate, the thunder of the big guns over on the front, coming into the Valley of Peace. Again and again came that distant muttering, and presently I heard the drone of motors above me, and, looking up, I saw one of those marvels of the twentieth century, an aëroplane, flying high above the valley and over the village where the Maid was born. The Present was meeting the Past.

CHAPTER XVI

MEMORIAL DAY IN FRANCE

THE weeks dragged slowly by, with the great drive still gaining ground in spite of the most desperate resistance of the Allies. The American troops had been thrown into the line and had astonished the soldiers of the other nations by their fighting qualities. And America had speeded up in a wonderful way, so that 300,000 men a month were pouring into France.

At last America was coming with typical American speed! Could the British and the French hold out a little longer—just a little longer? If so, we from the land of the Stars and Stripes knew that our America would hurl at the Germans a mighty army of the hardest fighting men in the world. Cheered and heartened by the knowledge that the giant of the new world had at last been aroused to this

needed action, the soldiers of England and France fought with a heroism unprecedented in history.

And so we waited and watched and prayed.

Then came Memorial Day, the first that America observed in France. The Red Cross had charge of the services in Neufchâteau. In the morning the Y. M. C. A. secretaries, soldiers, nurses, Red Cross men and Salvation Army workers assembled at the Rebeval Barracks and the parade moved to the little French cemetery on the opposite side of the town.

Many of the French shopkeepers closed their stores in respect to this American day of memory, and all along the line of our march the French townspeople and soldiers stood in respectful attitude (the soldiers at attention) as they watched the column moving to the burial ground to pay tribute to our dead. Through the town and along the winding road beyond we went, and then to the cemetery on the green hillside overlooking the valley. Frequently French women leaned from their windows to hand us flowers as we passed close beside their homes.

In the cemetery we formed in a hollow square about the graves of the American soldiers sleeping there, most of whom had been members of the Twenty-sixth Division. An American firing squad was back of us, and close to our lines stood a number of school children, adults and French soldiers.

We sang a number of songs, including "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," there were prayers by the Salvation Army and Y. M. C. A. men, a short tribute by a Red Cross officer, and a brief address in English by Lieutenant Dechelette, a French officer on duty at Base Hospital No. 66. After the services I obtained from Lieutenant Dechelette the manuscript of his speech, written by himself and read in excellent English. It reads:

"We welcome your dead alongside our own—comrades in arms and in graves. To the honor of America, the United States has decided to take its own share in the great fight, the fight of France and her Allies to obtain more justice and liberty in the world. With your whole power, with all your heart, you came to help us and to relieve us.

"And so, on this Memorial Day a French voice assures you that your feelings for your dead are faithfully echoed in our hearts. Between you and us the soul-communion is entire and we cannot be indifferent to anything that is yours, either joy or sorrow.

"With these feelings of grateful sympathy the Medical Service officers and the pupils of Neufchâteau College come to participate in this Remembrance ceremony and make more evident by their presence the Franco-American brotherhood."

The Red Cross nurses decorated the graves, sixty in number, the firing squad fired the customary three volleys and a bugler sounded "Taps." With the sunshine of a perfect day bathing the hills and valley, the scene was unforgettable.

And only a few miles away American troops were engaged in the most stupendous battle recorded in history.

I am sure that one of the grateful memories of the French people that will be brought back by Americans will be that of the loving manner in which they cared for the graves of our dead. As a matter of course, our dead rest in many

villages and obscure places in that land, and often as the tide of war moved the armies here and there the American troops marched away from the spots where their comrades lay sleeping, and perhaps those particular sections never again were occupied by our men. But the graves of those they left behind never suffered from neglect. The French villagers took up the loving care that the departing Americans were forced to abandon, and the graves of our soldiers always have been watched over and strewn with flowers by the women and children.

It is of record that at one point in the Toul sector the rules of the church would not permit the burying of a Protestant American in the little Catholic cemetery, so he was laid to rest just outside the cemetery, close to the stone fence that surrounded the sacred bivouac of the dead—and that night French Catholic hands tore down the wall that separated the American boy from those who slept within the cemetery. They wanted that he should not rest in isolation. So far as I know, that section of the fence was never restored.

I hope that nothing in the relation of this in-

cident will give to the reader the idea that there was conflict over there between the religions, and that service of any kind ever halted at the picket lines of a faith. It is not so. Catholics, Protestants, and Hebrews worked together without jealousy and without intolerance. In the huts of each of these organizations the men of any religion—or of no religion—were equally welcomed and served, and on the battlefields the chaplains and secretaries, Catholic and Protestant, and Jewish rabbis served faithfully, courageously, and without heed as to the religion of those who came under their ministrations.

The Y. M. C. A. gave its huts freely to the Catholic priests for the holding of mass and other affairs, and I desire here and now to express my appreciation of the cordial help rendered me in the field by Catholic chaplains.

Those were days when the world was taught lessons it should not forget.

Day after day American troops were going forward to different sections of the line. So far the hammering had all been west of us, but there were signs that a smash was to be at-

tempted through the Toul sector, and huge guns were mounted in favorable positions miles back of the front lines, in order that the Allies might be prepared should the enemy succeed in breaking through at this point.

The hospitals all about us filled rapidly with the wounded, the American hospital trains being the acme of comfort and efficiency in arrangement, and the marvel of the world. And these trains with their burdens of suffering were on the move almost constantly.

I visited the wounded and the dying, and discovered in them a fortitude undreamed of. Suffering from wounds of every conceivable nature, from indescribable disfigurements and mutilations, their faces ashy with suffering, they were always ready to look up at one and smile—and then chew their lips to choke back the moans of agony that struggled for expression.

"It's all right, sir," said one lad, his right leg and arm missing. "It's only a part of the price we must pay for the new world we're to have after this war."

His voice was steady, in spite of the pallor of

his face, but I found something akin to a sob rising in my throat. I turned away, but he spoke to me again.

"Don't you think, sir, that the world will be new after this?" he asked wistfully. "I have read so much about this in the American papers, and it has helped me to face this thing. The boys—the American boys, at least—want to end war forever. Don't you think we really will have a new world, sir?"

Before me was lying a boy—for he was little more than twenty—who was hugging close to his soul the welfare of mankind, a lad who had lost his right leg and right arm on the battlefield but who was saying in sincerity most evident that it was all right—if it was a part of a price to be paid for humanity's sake, if his sufferings were to have a bearing on the remaking of the world. I shall never forget his words. I can never remember mine, except that I tried to feel truthfulness in my heart when I stumblingly assured him that I felt no doubt of the rebirth of the world. I tried to feel truthfulness in my heart, I say—but I could not escape a realization that I was

doubtful of the assurance I tried to give him.

Are we, in truth, to have a new world?

What is this new world of which we heard so much during the battle days, this new world for which America poured out her billions of treasure, for which our young men fought so gallantly, and for which tens of thousands of them laid down their lives? Are we really to have this wonderful Something? Are we to keep faith with the dead who died in the belief that a better era was to come?

How is this new world to come? Is it to come through peace treaties and covenants of a league—or of leagues—of nations? Is it to be a matter of new political machinery? Or is the world to turn at last to a genuine acceptance of the teachings of Christ?

We have emerged victorious from a night of war and battle-storm. Shall we forget those hours of travail when on our knees we cried unto God?

When the world plunged into the abyss of war many cried out in their bitterness of spirit that Christianity had failed, that the Church of

God had not fulfilled its mission else this catastrophe would not have befallen us.

What say you of the future? Shall we fail to respond to the cry for help that is now being made by the churches of all denominations, for help in making its mission the success some charge the church with failing to achieve when war came? If it was true that the church had not properly fulfilled its mission, whose was the fault? Was it our neighbors' fault—or yours and mine? Did you and I go to its aid and support when it was battling against a growing menace, or did we ignore its cry for our aid?

If we had given no more help to the armies battling in France, battling for freedom and humanity, than we did to the churches of our America battling to conquer the selfishness and trickery that inevitably lead to war, what would have been the result, and with what right would we have charged those armies with failure to win success?

I shall never forget that maimed boy and his anxious questionings. The future is ours to mar or glorify. Are we to have a new world?

Shall you and I keep faith with those who sleep in Flanders fields? Have you and I learned that "Righteousness exalteth a nation"?

If we have not, that maimed boy and his mutilated and dead comrades have sacrificed in vain.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SMILING, FIGHTING ARMY

THE days that followed until the middle of June were filled with the same strenuous work of serving at the canteen counter from early in the morning until late at night, except on the evenings when I left the canteen to drive to other camps to lecture. Day after day we cheered forward the steady stream of American soldiers marching to the flaming battle lines—and day after day we received back broken and suffering ones who had gone forward so strong and smilingly but a few days before.

And then I received a telegram from the Paris headquarters ordering me to report there immediately for transfer to the lecturing department of the "Y."

This gave me my third opportunity to study Paris. My first visit to the city in early De-

cember had shown me a mourning, gloomy, depressed Paris. The second stay in Paris was late in March, at which time I saw a city bombed from the air and shelled by a strange monster of a cannon, but a city unconquered and determined to fight to the last; a city realizing the gravity of the war situation, but with its former despondency overwhelmed by the fighting spirit aroused by the challenge of the enemy with his Murder Gun, "Big Bertha." This June visit was to reveal to me a city with all important statues and monuments hidden by sand-bags, a city that was now devoting itself to conquering the weak-souled and the traitorous ones who sought to spread the doctrine of submission, a city highly organized for desperate defense against the foe now thundering his big guns only two score of miles to the northward.

Food was noticeably scarcer in France now than it had been six months before. The difference was evident on the few dining-cars that were operated by the railroads and in the hotels and restaurants. Americans were vitally concerned in the food supply of France in

those days, and I am sure that the following extract taken from the Paris edition of the London *Daily Mail* of June 8, 1918, will prove of marked interest:

"The Paris Prefect of Police yesterday issued a Note giving a list of maximum prices fixed for the wholesale and retail sale of meat. The retail prices for first, second, and third qualities of rump-steak are eight francs, sixty centimes; eight francs, forty centimes; and seven francs, eighty centimes the kilo, respectively. The prices for beefsteak are eight francs; seven francs, ninety centimes; and seven francs, thirty centimes the kilo. An English pound of best quality rump-steak thus costs about three francs, ninety centimes, and beefsteak about three francs, sixty centimes."

Let me explain that in France they do not weigh by pounds, but by kilograms (nearly always referred to as "kilos"). A kilogram is slightly more than two and one-fifth English pounds—2.2046 pounds avoirdupois, to be exact. At the rate of exchange prevailing at that time, an American dollar was worth five francs, seventy centimes of French money, so the reader may easily figure what the different

qualities of meat would cost per pound in "God's money," as the Yanks used to call United States money.

This brings up another question that I have been asked very frequently. "Was horse-meat sold in France?" It was—and I presume it still is, and probably will continue to be sold there. I do not know whether I have ever eaten any or not. If I did I enjoyed it, for I found the meats in France to be unusually good. Perhaps it was the skill with which it was cooked that made it so tender and good, for the French can take a few odds and ends that an American cook would sneer at, and of it the *cuisinier* will concoct a tempting and delicious feast.

If I ever ate any horse-meat I did not know it—but my guess is that Dobbin has been the *pièce de résistance* of more than one meal I ate over there, for in one town near the border of Alsace I took my meals at a little restaurant next door to a meat-shop that prominently displayed over its door a large (but artificial, of course) horse's head and a sign stating that it was a "horse-meat shop." I frequently saw

carts drive up there with quarters of horse for the shop, and the French with whom I carried on my very lame and imperfect discussion concerning horse-meat as an edible always assured me with great sincerity that it was *très bon* (very good—excellent).

Bread-cards were issued to the civilians, and the same cards were given to Y. M. C. A. secretaries. They provided for 100 grammes of bread—about three and one-third ounces—at each meal. New cards were issued each month upon application to the proper authorities, each person being entitled to three cards for each month, a breakfast-card, a dinner-card, and a supper-card. Thus a card for April, or *Avril,* to use the French word for that month, would contain thirty coupons—one for each day of the month—each coupon bearing the name of the month, the day, and *"100 grammes de pain."* ("Pain" being the French word for bread, and being pronounced "pan.")

At breakfast one would present his bread-card, the waitress would clip off the coupon for that day and bring the bread; at dinner one would present another card, the coupon for

FRENCH BREAD CARD.

It was necessary to have one of these cards in order to be served bread with your meals in hotel or restaurant. Each coupon was good for bread for one meal — 100 grammes being about three and one-third ounces. Three cards were issued to each individual, one being used for breakfasts, one for the noon meal, and one for the evening meal. This card was for the month of "*Avril*," the French for April.

that date would be clipped off, and at supper the third card would be presented and the coupon for that day clipped from it.

Sugar-cards were also issued, each coupon of which permitted one to purchase a certain amount of sugar. No meat-cards were necessary in France, but in England, Scotland, and Ireland one had to have a card for almost everything he ate. I will refer to the English cards farther on.

By the middle of June sugar was scarce in France, and *saccharin,* a coal-tar product, and therefore injurious, was offered as a sweetening substitute for sugar. It was a clear syrup, and looked innocent enough.

When I reached Paris I found that there was great uneasiness there lest the Germans should succeed in capturing the city, or in battering it to ruins with their artillery should they advance much farther, even if they did not capture it. They had broken through the French position on the *Chemin des Dames,* and day by day they had drawn nearer to the capital, until Paris was in imminent danger of a bombardment like unto that visited

upon Rheims. That the city would be invaded by the Huns was not beyond belief.

The very breath of the approaching beast was in the faces of those who remained in Paris. On still nights the sound of the distant fighting could be heard in the threatened city, and nightly air-raids and frequent bombardments by "Big Bertha" added to the ominousness of the situation.

And amid all of this trial the suffering French patriots were confronted by another foe in their very midst—the traitorous and the weak-souled who began to whisper—and then to speak more loudly—into the ears of the people that now was the time to make peace, that the Germans could not be stopped, that the Americans had not arrived in sufficient force, that only useless torrents of blood and the destruction of Paris would result from further resistance. "Make peace! Make peace!" they cried.

But in that dark hour the American marines came rushing forward and threw themselves across the pathway of the victorious hordes

FRENCH SUGAR CARD.

With this card one could purchase the allotted amount of sugar from the dealers. This card was good for the months of *Avril*, *Mai*, *Juin*, *Juillet*, *Aout*, and *Septembre* (April, May, June, July, August and September), there being six coupons for each month. The amount allowed for each coupon varied from month to month.

sweeping down toward the Marne. They came on the battle-field worn by days and nights of marching and travel in trucks and cattle cars; they came to the field that was to win them undying honor and to save France and civilization.

Around Château-Thierry and Belleau Woods they met the enemy, stormed at him with the passion of humanity and freedom in their souls, and the German drive was stopped at the point nearest Paris. History will show that after that the Germans never gained a kilometer on that front, and while it is true that the advance of the Allies—an advance that was never halted—began with Marshal Foch's terrific blow on July 18th, I am convinced that the tide of victory turned against the foe that first week in June when the marines and other American troops barred the road to Paris with their young bodies.

But while this action on the part of the Americans had brought untold joy to the hearts of the French, and they had been amazed at the fighting qualities of our men, yet the drive had been stopped only at the point near-

est Paris, and perhaps but temporarily. The immediate crisis had been passed, but the danger was not ended. Full well they knew that a reinforced foe might succeed in overwhelming that heroic defense and reach or demolish Paris, the probability of a heavy vengeance on the part of the Germans being doubled by their present disastrous check.

So Paris was tense and fearful when I arrived there on the 19th of June.

At Y. M. C. A. headquarters there was much uncertainty. The tide of battle was so ever-changing that no human being could foretell what a day might bring forth. Plans carefully thought out had to be abandoned over night because of changed conditions. Railroad travel was so disarranged that no dependence could be placed on it.

I had left my trunk in storage in Paris when I had gone back to the field the last time, and now I realized that it was not improbable that the trunk would be lost, together with certain articles of great value to me. It all depended upon the holding powers of those who were out

there in front of the city. That the enemy would not be content to accept this halting of his advance without a supreme effort to again smash through we well knew.

At Y. M. C. A. headquarters they advised me to send my trunk to Tours for safety. The "Y" had a big warehouse at Tours, and I was told that I could send my trunk down there, get a receipt for it, and get it whenever I wished to. In the meantime it would be safe, for there was no chance that the Germans would sweep so far southward as that. The war would end before they got to that point.

Headquarters officials told me that they had sent many records and other valuables out of the city, and had so arranged their affairs that they could remove all their important papers to safety on very short notice. I decided that it was the wise thing for me to do. But I had an assignment that would take me out of the city to the northward for a few days, and I told them that when I returned I would turn the trunk over to them.

And in those few days I saw that which brought solace to my troubled mind. Out

there I saw train-load after train-load and truck-load after truck-load of American soldiers rushing to the battle lines. They knew that they were the last hope of humanity; they knew that they were going forward to what was to be the most important and probably the most bloody battle in history; they knew that their young bodies and their unconquerable spirit must meet and defeat the cruelest foe the world had known.

And what was their attitude as they rushed to this tryst with death? Were they despondent, sorrowful, reluctant? Ah, no! They were singing the songs of their homeland; they shouted, jested and waved joyously at whomsoever they passed on the way. In their buttonholes were wild-flowers, and from the muzzles of their guns the brilliant posies nodded.

Never has the world seen a more wonderful army than marched beneath the Stars and Stripes in this great war.

As I watched and studied them, my heart grew lighter and my confidence in the successful resistance of that young army rose. When I returned to Paris headquarters I called on

the official who had discussed with me the storing of my trunk in Tours. After greeting me he reached into a drawer and drew forth the receipt that was to identify my trunk in the Tours warehouse. I declined to receive it.

"Just tear up that receipt, will you?" I said.

He looked at me in surprise.

"What's the trouble?" he asked.

"No trouble at all," I answered, "but I've been out where I've seen some things, and I've made up my mind to bet the Kaiser my trunk that he can't take Paris."

And to-day the world knows who won the bet. To-day the world knows the story of that July day when the French and Americans launched the great counter-offensive from Château-Thierry along a twenty-five-mile front, and how the Americans fought once more with a valor that thrilled the world and that sent the German hordes staggering back broken and beaten—the beginning of the great retreat that was to stop only when the demoralized foe sued for peace.

In those days the "Y" men in Paris whose

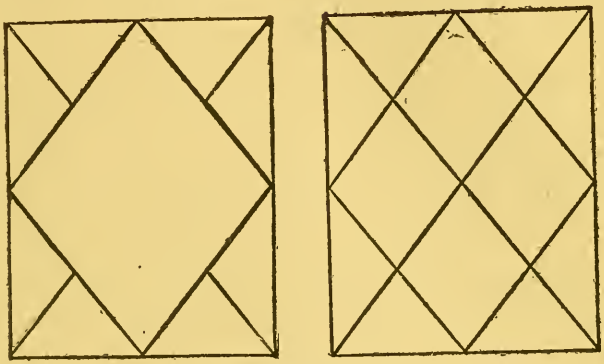
time was not entirely taken up with other duties went to the aid of the Red Cross, this organization having been almost overwhelmed with the thousands of wounded coming back from the battle-fields and the flood of refugees fleeing before the invading armies.

We helped care for the homeless, we carried the wounded from the ambulances into the trains or from the trains to the ambulances, as the different cases might be. Night and day the Y. M. C. A. men worked with the Red Cross at that time of trial.

I found time to visit often with the wounded. And always I came from their presence with a holier conception of God and man.

By this time the merchants in Paris and other cities in France had hit upon a clever plan for protecting their large windows from being shattered by the concussion of shells or bombs that might burst near by. Narrow strips of strong paper were pasted over the glass in various artistic designs that permitted the window-display of merchandise to be viewed without hindrance and at the same time served to strengthen the glass. Of course it was no pro-

tection against flying fragments, but only against concussion.



WINDOW PROTECTIONS

The counter-offensive had not been launched by General Foch when I left Paris again for the field, this time to visit different sections of the fighting line as a lecturer. I was in the field that July day when Foch struck and I shall never forget it, for I was under shell-fire all that day myself, and I remember well how tense our nerves were as we waited for news of the result of the critical struggle taking place at another point in the line.

CHAPTER XVIII

"LEAVE" TRAINS AND BARBER-SHOPS

THIS time I was to go over into Alsace, one of the "lost provinces" torn from France by Germany in 1870.

Owing to the generally demoralized railroad conditions I was compelled to go by a very roundabout way to my first working center down in the Vosges Mountains, a route that took me through the famed city of Nancy, an important place that the Germans had been attacking either by land or the air since early in the war.

It was sadly battered when I arrived there on the evening of June 24th. Here it was that I met the famous Rainbow (Forty-second) Division, which had been fighting around Baccarat and Luneville, south of Nancy, and was now moving toward the Somme and imperishable glory.

It was only by traveling on a *permissionaire*

train that I succeeded in getting out of Nancy for the southeast. A *permissionaire* train is a special train run for the benefit of French soldiers on *permission*—on leave. Captain Bruce Bairnsfather, of the British army (according to my notion the real humorist of the war, so far as cartoons are concerned), has given the world the best picture I have ever seen of one of these "leave" trains.

His picture shows a British soldier cramped in between a number of sleeping French soldiers, each Frenchman's face adorned with one of the huge moustaches they so adore, and with impedimenta of various kinds "chinked" in wherever space would allow. Beneath the eloquent picture he says:

"You will never quite realize how closely we are bound to our French Ally until you have had the good fortune to travel on one of those 'leave' trains—six a side, windows shut, fifty miles to go, and eighteen hours to do it!"

Most of the *poilus* among whom I was crowded were mellow with *vin rouge* (red wine)—some of them shoutingly mellow, and

others snoringly mellow; all of them smellingly so. They were just out of the trenches and were careless of everything except the fact that they had been granted at least one more week in which to live. After that week, back to the trenches and ——?

They sang "*Madelon*" at the top of their voices while the darkened train crept on its way; they roared out questions and statements to me (none of which I understood), they snored vociferously, and they vomited freely upon the floor. With rebellious stomach I thought of a certain remark made by General Sherman, and I wondered what he would have said of war had he traveled on a French "leave" train.

But there came a time when I had the joy of crawling out of that close fellowship and filling my lungs with the sweet air of the great out-of-doors.

The next night I lectured in a camp of the Twentieth Engineers, an organization that had the distinction of being the biggest regiment in the world. Detachments of this regiment were scattered all over France. They were engaged

in the prosaic, but highly important work of cutting timber up in the mountains, sending it by team and inclined railway down to the mill they had constructed in the valley, and then sawing it into timbers for trenches, artillery emplacements, etc.

The world read much of the brilliant work of the airmen, the artillerymen, and the infantry, but few ever paused to pay tribute to the work being done so heroically by men like these, men buried from the public's attention, but men who were doing a work just as important as that being performed by those who went over the top with bayonet and bomb.

These men were not under shell-fire, but German planes were over them almost constantly, and the "pluh! pluh! pluh!" of anti-aircraft shells could be heard high above them at almost any hour.

This night I lectured standing in the middle of a mountain road, with the men sitting on rocks and stumps and fallen trees all about me, the flow of oratory being interrupted by a French peasant with one leg and the *croix de guerre* who came along driving a slow-plodding

yoke of oxen dragging a small tree. We had to suspend the address and get out of his way until the meek-eyed beasts had passed down the road.

The next evening I lectured in the Casino, a very pretty little theatre, in Gerardmer. Such were the changes the days brought to us.

For a few days I enjoyed the delights of living in this rather pretty and interesting city, surrounded by the majestic beauties of the Vosges Mountains, driving out to different points along the front lines to speak, dodging shells, bombs, and gas. Not all of my trips were by car, however—at least, not all of the way. There were points beyond which an auto was not allowed to proceed, and thence on it was a case of clambering up and down mountain trails and doing one's best to keep out of view of German snipers.

On one of these jaunts across the mountains, over into Alsace, I passed close to the hotel Altenberg, near La Schlucht, a hostelry where the Kaiser and the Crown Prince used to visit when they journeyed into Alsace. Now it

was in French hands, but it stood out on the mountain side in plain view for miles—and that day the Germans sent a couple of shells into it, just to make sure that no one was desecrating the rooms made sacred by Wilhelm II.

But those were days when I could spend much of the time along the front lines and still live with the comforts of hotel and barber-shop awaiting me.

Perhaps I should not use the word "comfort" in connection with a French barber-shop. The American soldiers in from the trenches used to rush for these shops—the first time. They may have visited them again, but they did not crowd the doors. Usually a Yank had to be pushed into the door of one of these barber-shops before he would believe that he was being correctly directed. The boys in khaki would search the alleys, back doors, front doors and *abris,* looking for a barber-shop, pass one a dozen times, and stand on the street looking around in a bewildered way, trying to locate the place that they had been told by some other and better acquainted Yank was "just three doors down the street."

They certainly have a wonderful skill when it comes to hiding their barber-shops over there. The fact that a sign "*Coiffeur*" is hanging out in front of a place does not mean anything to the average Yank, and if they finally peep into the place it rarely resembles what they are searching for.

I know they have American barber-chairs in France—or at least one chair of this kind—for I sat in one in Paris. There may be many others, but it is the only one I saw. All the other shops used plain, straight-back chairs. One doughboy said to me that the only difference he could see between a French barber-chair and a plain American dining-room chair was that the latter is more comfortable and you can lean back farther in it.

You sit in one of these straight, uncomfortable chairs, bend your head back as far as you can—(thanks to the activity of the boche airmen we were somewhat accustomed to this position)—and the gentleman with the lather-brush seizes you. My most vivid recollection of a French barber was of one who had learned two English words, "Very good," and these he

would hurl at me about every thirty seconds, sometimes with a question in his voice, and sometimes with a hint of defiance. I always meekly replied *"Oui, oui."*

When I had had my first French shave the barber after completing his work with the razor stepped back and said something to me, which, of course, I did not understand. So I sat still and waited. He repeated it, and I looked at him with an air that was intended to tell him to cut out the conversation and resume the barbering. But he only repeated his remark a little more explosively. This time he made motions as if washing his face. I looked into the mirror and saw that my face was generously smeared with lather. Evidently the simpleton was asking if I wanted my face washed. Of course I did.

"Yes—sure—washee, washee—*oui, oui,*" I replied, floundering helplessly and mixing in Chinese pidgin-English with my efforts to make him understand that I certainly wanted my face washed.

The barber said something more, went through the same washing motion again, and

this time pointed to the bowl in front of me. Evidently he had not understood my fluent reply. I nodded vigorously.

"*Oui, oui,*" I said sharply, pointing to the wash-bowl filled with water. "Confound it, yes," I finished, as he still stood waiting.

Just then a Frenchman in the chair next to me crawled out, leaned forward and washed his own face in his bowl and then got back into the chair. A great light broke upon me. I was to wash my own face instead of having the barber do it for me while I remained in the chair, as they do in America. I grinned sheepishly, mumbled an apology the Frenchman did not understand, and proceeded to wash my own face.

And not a Frenchman in the place gave the slightest evidence that I had made myself ludicrous. In America there would have been a guffaw of ridicule.

But by the time I had arrived in Gerardmer I had learned that in a French barber-shop one was expected to wash his own face, and that always the wash-bowl was emptied by tipping

it backward on the swivels that held it, there being no hole in the bottom with a rubber plug, as in American wash-bowls. You had to "tip" both the barber and his bowl.

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT THE FOURTH OF JULY DID

THE Fourth of July found me in Epinal, a short distance back of the lines, and there I had the opportunity of observing the American and French celebration of our Independence Day.

That day was a huge success in every way. The heads of the two nations (France and America) and the leaders of the armies of these nations recognized the fact that up to that time the brotherly love between the French and the Americans was not slopping over to any alarming extent, and every effort was made to use the glorious Fourth as a cementing day. The result was pleasing.

Throughout France the people had responded to the appeals and general propaganda looking toward an opening of French hearts to the Yanks, and everywhere the people

joined generously with us in celebrating the day. Epinal, like other French cities, was rather profusely decorated with French and American flags, and a few flags of other of the Allies, and together the French and Americans—soldiers and civilians—made a big day of it. French and American military bands took part, French and American soldiers carried out a program of athletics—sometimes the French and Americans competing, and in other events each nationality holding its own contest.

One of the principal American events, of course, was a baseball game, and this event gripped the French—and baffled them. It was an interesting study to see how the French watched the game, to listen to their babel of remarks concerning it, and to hear their startled "*Oh, la! la!*" when some Yank base-runner came tearing for the home plate and dived for it recklessly when the ball was whipped to the catcher. They persisted in crowding the foul lines, and now and then there were wild stampedes and many exclamations as a brawny boy from Yankland went rushing into the crowd, with all the force and speed of

an express-train, heedless of everybody and everything except his desire to nail the ball.

Street venders did a thriving business selling tiny flags, both French and American, and small bows of ribbon, one half of the bow showing the American colors and the other half the French. The very best of feeling existed from the first, and this grew still more cordial as the hours passed. One old French woman of whom I purchased one of these combination bows insisted on pinning the ribbon upon my breast and then kissing me on both cheeks. As I made my escape from the unexpected demonstration I saw tears rolling down her cheeks. *"Americaines! Bons Americaines!"* ("Good—or kind—Americans!") she exclaimed.

Referring to flags, I saw more flags that day than I saw during all of the rest of the time I was in France. This was not a "flag war." Usually in the villages one saw the French flag hung out in front of the *Mairie* (mayoralty, or town headquarters), but not elsewhere. As for American flags, they were seldom seen. It was quite different from the

old days when flags were fluttered wherever a corporal's guard of soldiers could be found.

It was the same with swords. I saw a few French officers carrying swords, but I did not see an American officer in France with a sword. I do not undertake to say there were none. I do say that they were very few—if any.

On the Fourth of July, I met an American negro in a French uniform and wearing the *croix de guerre,* which he had won by gallantry in battle. He was a tall, broad-shouldered darkey, and was from Georgia, I found upon talking with him. He spoke French fluently and was a man of marked intelligence, although clinging to the typical negro style of expression, as was shown when I asked him how he chanced to be over there fighting in the French army.

"Well, suh," he replied, grinning infectiously, "about three years ago my curiosity done got the better of my good sense—and here I is."

That night he took part in a boxing tournament in the theatre and knocked his French

opponent stiff. The next morning I saw him starting for the front once more, his white teeth flashing in a typical Georgia darkey grin as he waved good-bye to me.

"I'd shuah like to be gittin' back to dem watermillyuns," he shouted. "But Mistah Foch has done asked me to clean up on a few mo' boches first, an' I suhtenly am gwine ter git rough with 'em from now on."

The "peanut whistle" on the locomotive shrieked and the long train of third-class cars started its jolting journey toward the front—and death. He was a gallant soldier, a worthy son of a race to which our America owes much, and I am hoping that the god of battles spared him to return to his beloved Georgia.

Here, too, on the Fourth of July I met Major Dietrich, of the French army, a great-great-grandson of M. Dietrich, who was mayor of Strasbourg in 1792, and in whose house on the 24th of April of that year "*The Marseillaise*" was written by Rouget de l'Isle. Major Dietrich told me the story of the writing of "*The Marseillaise,*" the French National Hymn, and as there may be others who are in-

terested, but who are as unacquainted with the story as was I, I beg to relate it very briefly.

M. Dietrich, mayor of Strasbourg, assembled at his home on the night mentioned a number of young men, volunteers, who were going to fight against Austria in the war which had just been declared. Among the invited guests was Rouget de l'Isle, a young captain of engineers. During dinner the mayor gave it as his opinion that France needed a hymn of war, or a national anthem.

"My dear fellow," he said, turning to Rouget, "you are both a poet and a musician. Cannot you compose something that is worthy to be sung?"

About midnight the young captain went to his room, thinking deeply on the subject. Standing before the open window with his violin he composed the words and music of this wonderful song. The next morning he took the composition to M. Dietrich. It produced a profound sensation. It was printed and sent all over France, but it was the *Marseillaise*—the volunteers from Marseilles—who were first

to sing it, and thus it came to be called "*La Chant des Marseillaise.*"

On the Fourth of July General Pershing issued the following message to America on behalf of the American Expeditionary Forces:

> "On this anniversary of our independence, the officers and men of the American Expeditionary Forces on the battle-fields of France renew their pledges of fealty and devotion to our cause and country. The resolve of our forefathers that all men and peoples shall be free is their resolve. It is quickened by sympathy for an invaded people of kindred ideals and the war challenge of an arrogant enemy. It is fortified by the united support of the American people.
>
> "(Signed) PERSHING."

On July 14th, when France celebrated Bastille Day—a day that means to her what Independence Day means to us—the Americans united with the French in celebrating the occasion. Again flags were flung to the breezes, and again every effort was made by the leaders of both peoples to bind the soldiers in closer fellowship.

On July 14th Marshal Joffre issued the following message to the Americans in France:

> "France celebrates on July 14th her national independence, as the Americans observed theirs July 4th. On these two solemn days American and French hearts beat in unison. All feel that the moment approaches when, thanks to their common efforts, the defeat of Germany will allow all free nations to celebrate at last the independence of the world.
>
> "(Signed) J. JOFFRE."

The efforts put forth brought excellent results. From that day on a better feeling began to manifest itself between the Americans and the French. This was helped out by the generous manner in which the French newspapers chronicled successes on the part of the American soldiers. Over in London the English had first swallowed hard and then observed the Fourth of July in a manner most wonderful to consider.

The Fourth of July was the greatest get-together day of the war, on the part of the Allies, and the effects of it were soon to be

seen in the terrific punches delivered and perfect team-work manifested by the soldiers of the different nations fighting Germany.

CHAPTER XX

HELMETS AND GAS-MASKS

AFTER the Fourth I went to the trenches again, and the remainder of my stay in France was spent in going along the front lines.

Part of the time I worked with what the "Y" called a "traveling canteen." This was a camionette arranged with shelves much after the manner of the old-fashioned American huckster-wagons, and with this camionette we visited places along the front where there were no huts, and where, for various reasons, it was impossible to have a hut. For instance, a small detachment would be located at a certain spot far over in a forest—for a few days only. Then they would be moved to some other spot, and so on, *ad infinitum*. It was an impossibility to send a special secretary and a hut with that detachment on its constant wanderings, and as such detachments and wander-

ings were as numerous as the leaves on the trees, the only solution of their problem was in the traveling canteen.

We would load up our camionette at the storehouse close back of the lines, and then away we would go to the front to seek out these isolated ones. Wherever we found an American soldier we ministered to his wants if the stock we carried could do it. We packed quantities of chocolate, cigarettes, etc., etc., on our backs into the front trenches, observation-posts, artillery positions, and wherever the Yank was to be found. With us we took writing-paper and envelopes, and we always carried note-books in which we would jot down errands we were to perform for the soldiers when we got back to some town in the rear. One lad would want his watch fixed, another would desire a fountain-pen—their wants were legion—and these we would take note of and carry out to the best of our ability when the opportunity afforded.

Many of our American detachments were in little villages that were badly battered by bombs and shells. Oftentimes these villages

were located between American and German batteries, and shells were continually screaming overhead—and yet I have seen French women and children and old men continuing to live there, clinging to their homes in spite of everything.

At night they would sleep in their cellars, with gas-masks ready for adjustment, and always during the day they kept close to the *abris,* their gas-masks in position for instant use. In many of these villages camouflage of fish-nets interwoven with artificial foliage and grasses were draped here and there over the streets.

People have asked me about the things that most impressed me upon my return to America, and always I have replied that perhaps above all things else I was impressed with the sight of children who laughed and played and sang.

"Oh," some have replied, "do not all children laugh and play and sing?"

My answer is that in many sections of France they did not. They lived in an atmosphere of tragedy, of constant suffering, of death, of

dread, of cannon's roar and the fumes of poisonous gas. Count your—and your children's—blessings, you parents of America!

The art of camouflage was wonderfully effective as practised by the American soldiers along the front. Big guns placed close beside a road were so carefully hidden by screens of fish-net and artificial grasses and foliage that one probably would pass them without being aware of their proximity. And if one chanced to be passing in this ignorance of the true state of affairs just as one of the heavies was fired—well, try to imagine the effect, you who jump and exclaim when a paper sack is burst behind your back.

Of course, up there in and near the trenches we wore our shrapnel helmets always, with our gas-masks at the "*alerte.*" Often one is asked if these helmets are not uncomfortably heavy. My answer is that it depends largely upon circumstances. If one is marching along the road in the hot sun, with no firing going on, the helmet soon begins to feel as big as a wash-tub and as heavy as a cook-stove. But when one is under fire the helmet seems to shrink until it is

no larger than a thimble and as light as a feather.

As a matter of precise information let me state that mine weighs exactly two pounds and one ounce.

The French helmet is very different from the American and British helmets, and most people agree that the French ones are better-looking than ours. But as to serviceability, I believe the burden of the testimony is in favor of the Yank "bonnet." I have always felt that a young French student, who spoke excellent English, exactly stated the proposition in a conversation with me one day at Belfort. He took my helmet from my head and his from his head and held them side by side, examining them critically.

"Ah," he said, in his quaint way, "your American helmet is not so—what you call it?—æsthetic—not so pretty to look at, as the French helmet. But when the shrapnel comes—ah, then it is much better for the head than the French one."

I admitted that such was my opinion. He nodded, and then added, slowly:

"I believe, *Monsieur,* that it is much the same with the French and the Americans. The French, they wish to look, to appear just so, rather than to be. But the Americans, they wish to *be* rather than to *look.*"

The American gas-mask was the best mask in use in France. The mask first used by the French was a very simple affair, as will be noted in one of the illustrations shown elsewhere in this book. It consisted of a mask that was supposed to fit tightly over the face, with elastics over the head holding it in position. It was heavily padded, this padding being soaked with a chemical that was intended to neutralize the poison gas as it seeped through and to render safe the air one breathed. It was a little better than nothing, but that is about all that can be said for it. However, it undoubtedly saved thousands of lives—and that is tribute enough for any invention.

Later the French perfected a far superior mask that was said to be almost if not quite the equal of any mask in use. I never wore one of the improved French masks, but I am quite ready to believe in its efficiency—for I

saw an American brigadier-general carrying one, and I am not entertaining any doubts that an American brigadier would have about the best mask made.

The American and British masks were almost exactly alike, so much so that the average American soldier did not know whether he was wearing a British mask or an American mask, and thousands thought that they were wearing American masks, when the truth was they were wearing British ones. Practically the only difference between the two masks was that the American make was of slightly heavier material, and there were one or two unimportant technical differences in the construction of the two masks.

Army orders established two definite zones with respect to gas-mask regulations. In one of those zones, the farthest of the two from the front, the orders were that everybody must carry a gas-mask at all times. They were supposed to be carried on the left side. In this zone, which was carefully outlined as to its limits, there was very little likelihood of a gas attack, but in order to be on the safe side every

man was required to have his mask with him. Of course, the orders were not always obeyed, and but slight effort was made to enforce the order in that zone. Nevertheless, it existed.

In the other zone—along the front trenches—every man was supposed to wear his mask at the "*alerte*," or "ready" position. This meant shortening the long carrying shoulder-strap by means of a button and buttonhole until the mask rested on the chest, the strap about the neck. A string fastened to the top of the case in which the mask is carried was brought down to the lower corner, fastened to a small ring there and then passed about the body and tied to a small ring at the other lower corner of the case. This kept the case in which the mask is carried, and in which the canister always rests, from falling away from the body when one was stooping or crawling. At the *alerte* the mask case was carried with the flap unfastened, opening outward, so that upon an alarm being sounded one could instantly grab the mask, jerk it from the case, and adjust it.

When a gas alarm sounded one did three

things as quickly as possible—another case of "toot sweet, and the tooter the sweeter." With his left hand he struck the rear of his helmet and knocked it from his head, forward, the strap under the chin permitting it to fall clear, and with his right hand he dived into the case and brought out his mask, which he adjusted with both hands. But there was something he must do even more quickly than either knocking off his helmet or grabbing his mask. He must hold his breath instantly. If he were careless and took three or four breaths after the alarm sounded he might spend weeks in a hospital or afford employment for the burial squad.

When gas was first used it was thrown by projectors, but this meant that the side using it must wait until the wind was favorable, else it would be blown back and the gassers would be gassed. This happened all too frequently to make gas attacks popular sport on the part of those who were doing the projecting. Then the gas shell was invented, and artillery fired gas shells from four to six miles, where they exploded and clouds of gas enveloped those who

were attacked. This was a safe method for those making the attack, for the wind did not have to be reckoned with. Even if the wind blew toward the lines from which the shells were fired the gas would be dissipated long before it reached the point from which it had been sent.

These gas shells had a sound peculiarly their own, and the sound of the explosion was different from that of other shells, so that if things were not too lively one had a bit of a chance to detect the fact that a gas shell had landed near him. Later the Germans—and the Allies, too, I believe—destroyed that identifying sound by putting gas and shrapnel in the same shells. That is, not all shrapnel and high explosive shells contained gas, but most gas shells contained shrapnel.

Experts could adjust the mask within six seconds after the cry of "Gas!" That is, starting with the mask at the "*alerte*," where it was supposed to be carried at all times in the danger region. It was not strictly necessary to make the adjustment so quickly, although the quicker was always the better, but it was

necessary to adjust the mask before one took another breath.

On another page the reader will find a photograph showing all the parts of the mask, which has been taken from the case and turned inside out for the purpose of revealing the parts that few people have ever seen. The reader will understand, of course, that the part which covers the face has for the purpose of this picture been carefully folded back, so that the noseclip and mouthpiece might be clearly seen.

The noseclip will be seen just below and between the eyes of the mask. The noseclip is a padded, clothespin-like affair that is opened by compressing the circle of wire shown as connecting the noseclip. Releasing the compressed wire allows the clip to tighten after one has thrust his nose between its jaws. This compels the wearer of the mask to breathe through his mouth.

The mouthpiece is of hard rubber. It fits under the lips, tightly against the teeth, with projecting pieces of rubber for one to hold between his teeth, much like the mouthpieces used by football players. One then draws his breath

through the hole in the mouthpiece, shown in the illustration, which, of course, is connected with the tube that in turn connects with the canister at the lower end. This canister contains the chemicals. In the bottom of this canister is a valve that permits air to enter the canister, after which it is made "safe for democracy" by passing through the chemicals, and is then drawn up through the tubing and mouthpiece and into the soldier's lungs.

"Then what?" you may ask. "How does one get rid of the air he has breathed?"

Simply keep on breathing, inhaling and exhaling without ever for a breath removing the mouthpiece. Do you see the little flat piece of rubber in the circle just beneath the mouthpiece? That is on the outside of the mask, connected with the mouthpiece, and is a valve through which the exhalations of breath pass, but which closes tightly the instant there is an inhalation. Thus all air must come in through the valve in the bottom of the canister, pass through the chemicals, up through the tube and mouthpiece and be exhaled through the rubber valve shown. The mouthpiece is not removed

Two Gas-Masks.

Ready for a Gas Attack.

Lower left hand corner—The first gas-mask invented by the French, afterwards superseded by a greatly improved mask.

On the right—View of the important parts of the British gas-mask, largely used by the American soldiers, the American mask being exactly like it. This view shows the mask turned inside out.

At the top are seen the eyepieces. Immediately below and between them is the noseclip. Below this is the mouthpiece. Below it in the circle is shown the exhalation valve. Then comes the tube through which the wearer receives the purified air, which comes through chemicals contained in the canister shown at the lower end, the air entering the canister through a valve in the bottom.

for the exhalations. One breathes and exhales through the same orifice.

When one wishes to give orders or to speak for any purpose while wearing the mask he must do it in a very disjointed manner. He draws in a full breath, removes the mouthpiece, shouts a few words, slips the mouthpiece back between his lips, gets his breath again, removes the mouthpiece, shouts a few more words, and repeats this process until he has finished his oration—which usually is the very soul of brevity.

If you wish to practise and get some idea of how it is done just stick two fingers in your mouth to represent a mouthpiece, take a deep breath, remove your fingers, shout what you have on your mind, being careful to get your fingers back in your mouth each time before taking a breath.

Taking cognizance of the condition Pat was trying to set forth when he dolefully exclaimed, "Sure and I'll niver be able to get these boots on until I've worn them a time or two," the army saw to it that the soldiers had abundant practice in the adjustment of gas-

masks. At the first attempt one does feel much like Pat, that he can never get the thing on until he has worn it a time or two. And after the mask is on one usually feels sure that he will smother in a few minutes at the longest. But he doesn't.

However, it was for these reasons that frequent gas drills were imposed. The soldiers had to become so accustomed to diving into the case after the mask and adjusting it expertly that they would do it without having to pause and consider just what was to be done next and how it was to be done. Small sheds were erected, the men would be taken in there with their masks on, and the place would be filled with gas—usually "tear" gas, harmless beyond smarting the eyes if one's mask was not properly adjusted. They would be given practise in making short marches with masks on, also. Usually, the first time one tried wearing his mask he would pull it off in a few minutes, gasping for breath, but after a little practise he would find that he could breathe fairly comfortably through the tube.

Let nothing I have said be construed as

intimating that any one ever came to love a gas-mask. At best they were a sore trial—but familiarity with their discomforts made them endurable. However, there were many cases where American soldiers fighting with their gas-masks on tore them off in order to see and fight better. Some of them lived; many of them paid the price.

If the eyepieces became blurred it was possible to wipe them by thrusting the mask tissue—which is purposely loose and baggy about the eyes—inward with the fingers and then wiping the glasses with the tissue, after which the tissue is drawn back into position. Of course, this is all done from the outside of the mask, but the tissue is pushed inward so that the inside of the glasses are wiped. In other words, the baggy portion is simply folded inward until the inside of the glasses are touched.

There is no taste to the air as a result of its passing through the chemicals. The masks were supposed to be good for forty-eight hours of continuous use. Of course, no one ever had to wear a mask as long as that. I am not sure

what the record is for the wearing of masks, but men have kept them on for several hours at a time.

If possible, one should remain reasonably quiet while wearing a gas-mask, for the very simple reason that the more the exertion the more labored is the breathing under any circumstances, and thus exertion rendered gas-masks trebly obnoxious.

Just before the war closed, America was putting out a new mask that was far superior to any other. It is impossible for me to give a full description of it here, but it had no nose-clip or mouthpiece and one could wear it without any discomfort, running or performing any work while wearing it almost as easily as without it. A large number of these new masks had been sent across to France, but I am not certain as to whether or not any of them had been issued before hostilities ended.

It was one of the greatest blessings invented during the war. The new mask would save many thousands of lives, for the old ones were so uncomfortable that one always hesitated to the last second—and oftentimes too long—be-

fore putting on the mask, and oftentimes removed it too soon. With the new mask there would be no occasion for the reluctance in donning it, and the likelihood of its being removed too soon would be less.

The question is frequently asked as to how gas alarms were given. There are almost as many answers to this question as there were outfits in the field. Usually each outfit decided on its own gas alarm. In the trenches automobile klaxons and large bells, similar to dinner-bells on American farms, were much in use, and the good old-fashioned, ever-ready shout was always in order. Whoever detected gas shouted "Gas!" and whoever was nearest the klaxon, bell, or whatever was used, sounded the alarm, while every one held his breath and donned his mask.

"How did they detect gas?" is another question. It is difficult to answer clearly. So far as I was able to discover, there was no royal way of detecting gas. One detected it or one did not detect it, and that proposition entered largely into the question of his future health and happiness. I always thought of the old

recipe for deciding whether one had picked mushrooms or toadstools: " You cook them and eat them—and if you die they're toadstools."

Perhaps you can get the application to this gas question—and perhaps not. You see or smell something—and if you die it's gas. Of course, it wasn't always necessary for some one to be gassed in order to determine that gas had arrived. Gas sentries were on duty, whose business it was to note every shell, every peculiar coloring of the air, every suspicious odor. Oftentimes the sound of the exploding gas shell told the story, at other times the appearance of the slightly colored vapor forewarned, and at other times the first faint odor of the stuff was the means of its detection. Naturally, there were false alarms without number, so that many of the soldiers became skeptical and were in no hurry to put on their masks. As a consequence there were many casualties from gas that could have been avoided had not the men become Doubting Thomases because of false alarms.

Personally I was very fortunate as regards gas attacks. They took place all around me.

I have reached sectors where attacks had taken place but a short time before, and where the odor still clung to the bushes, and heavy gas attacks were made on sectors an hour after I left, but all I ever received was a dose of "tear" gas. I felt as if some one had suddenly dashed cayenne pepper, smartweed, and a few other similar articles into my eyes. They burned and smarted and the tears gushed so freely that an officer standing near by forgot his own plight long enough to suggest to me that all I needed was a towel and my bath would be complete.

There were several different kinds of gases used by both sides, a fact discussed so often that I will not go into that phase. But let no one imagine for a moment that the Americans were backward in the use of gas. They did not choose gas warfare. The enemy began it—and the Yanks carried it out a little more overwhelmingly than any other soldiers.

It is a fact not generally in circulation, too, that America had a new gas in course of manufacture that would have almost wiped out the enemy wherever it was used. The plans were

all set for a general use of this new gas when the big Allied drive should commence in the spring of 1919—for do not permit any one to convince you that the army leaders had any expectation of the end coming when it did.

True, you doubtless received letters from soldiers over there written during the summer of 1918 in which they assured you that the war would end before Christmas. It did. But that does not prove anything beyond the fact that soldiers were basing prognostications on their wishes—and they chanced to guess right. The French will tell you—and so will the English—that that sort of letter-writing went on all through the war. Year after year the war was to end " in six months." In January and February of 1918 I heard American officers offering to wager that it would end before the Fourth of July, and men were writing that they would all be home for Thanksgiving.

If one keeps on predicting the end " in a few months " there is bound to come a time when his last predictions will come true. So it was with those who confidently wrote home during the summer that the war would end soon.

The leaders of the armies expected the enemy to hold at what was known as the Hindenberg line; they expected the weather to break up and thus aid the Germans in resisting further advance, and the plan was for a tremendous smash in the spring of 1919, a smash participated in by an American army of four million men, a smash that would end the war by late summer or early fall. But the foe became demoralized, Germany went to pieces at home—and the end came suddenly.

CHAPTER XXI

SHELLS, TRAITORS, AND RELIGION

YOU have read so much about life in the trenches, about the desperate fighting, etc., that I am giving my attention to other phases—to acquainting you with the multitude of facts that others have not told. I want you to know about the dugouts, the observation-posts, the listening-patrols, the observation-balloons, the barbed wire, etc., etc.

Some have asked, "How deep is a trench?" When I was a small boy an old whaling captain came into the neighborhood on a visit, and I gazed upon him with awe. He had actually been on the sea fighting and slaying great, big whales! Then suddenly the thought came to me: Just how big was a whale? I decided to question the Captain.

"Captain Eli," I asked one day, "how big is a whale?"

He looked at me, blinked solemnly, and replied:

"Douse my toplights, lad—it depends altogether upon the size of the whale."

Young as I was I saw the point. I had as well have asked, "How big is a man, or a house?" And this illustrates my point. "How deep is a trench?" It depends upon its depth. Some trenches were very deep and some were very shallow. Some were ten or twelve feet deep, and others were so shallow that one had to stoop considerably in order to avoid being fired at by snipers.

I have been in trenches where they had guards posted at the shallow spots to warn absent-minded Yanks who came ambling along out of the deep sections, thinking of home and sweetheart, and utterly oblivious of the fact that in a moment they would be fully exposed to the view of a boche sharp-shooter.

"Crouch!" would yell the guard. Personally, I was surprised to find what a success I was as a croucher whenever I came to these places. Not at all willowy in my physical make-up, nevertheless I acquired the art of

crouching until I was a close competitor of the dachshund.

Often the trenches were floored with duckboards. You have heard much about duckboards in the trenches, but did any one ever explain what they were? Simply narrow boards —slats—nailed across stringers. They served to keep one's feet out of much of the water—but usually not all. Also, as a general thing, they were so slippery with mud and slush of various kinds that making one's way along duckboards was not an unmixed joy, especially as here and there a few boards—or perhaps all boards for a distance of several feet—w uld be missing.

And yet I have seen the time when I made fairly good speed along slippery duckboards. One occasion in particular rises to my memory. I was perhaps a hundred yards from the nearest dugout when the German batteries suddenly began bombarding us. For some time our batteries had been shelling the boche, and now Fritz opened on us with a hurricane of shells that shrieked about us and exploded with crashes like unto boiler explosions.

Everybody started for the dugouts. "W-h-ee-e-e-crash!" "W-h-ee-e-e-crash!" they came, geysers of dirt spouting high into the air with every explosion, limbs of trees flying in all directions, and shrapnel and shell fragments whining viciously. It seemed to me that many of those shells were coming directly toward me, and momentarily I expected to be blown to atoms.

I have heard it said that one never hears the shell that is going to hit him, so it is of no use to dodge. That is rank nonsense. One may never remember having heard it, but it is heard, just the same. One can hear shells coming, and after he has heard one he never forgets the sound. It is a peculiarly deadly whistling sound. In the open the soldiers would throw themselves prostrate the instant they heard that ominous whistling shriek. After some experience they learned to judge by the sound whether the shell was coming near them or not, so that it was not necessary to "hit the ground" at every whistle.

These were 77's that the Germans were hurling at us on this occasion, a shell very similar

to the famous French 75's, and an inferno seemed to have broken loose, an inferno that whistled and crashed and was filled with flying débris.

Friends have asked me if I ran for the dugout. I shall tell the truth. I did not run. I have always contended that there was no need for a man to run if he could walk as fast as I did. But at that I was not the first one to reach the shelter of the dugout for which I was making. It all goes to show that Age cannot compete with Youth in athletics. Perhaps the fact that the duckboards along which I had to make my way were as slippery as if they had been carefully smeared with axle-grease had something to do with the fact that I did not run.

After a moment or two of this firing with 77's alone the Germans added 157's to their bombardment, and then the earth began to rock beneath the terrible concussions. The hot wind beat against my face in waves with each explosion, and the entire universe—sky and earth—seemed to heave and pitch dizzily. One 77 landed so close to me that I was staggered by the explosion and felt the sting of flying dirt

against my face, but by a miracle I was otherwise untouched and finally reached the dugout in safety.

Here we were safe—unless one of the big shells dropped squarely upon the place, in which case this volume would not have been written. And here we remained for more than an hour of terrific shelling that stripped trees, blew them to pieces, tore great pits in the earth, and killed eight soldiers before they could reach shelter. That there were no more casualties was remarkable, and was due alone to the fact that the American position was well chosen as regards protection.

When the bombardment began the American gunners were driven from their pieces and sought shelter in dugouts, also, and there they remained until the hurricane of German rage had spent itself, and then the Yanks sprang back to their guns and opened vigorously on their enemies.

What to me was the oddest sensation I felt at any time while at the front, always was mine when I was between opposing batteries and the shells of both Americans and Germans were

whining over my head. This was my experience day after day, and one that was decidedly interesting. In fact, this was always one's experience when in the front trenches, for the artillery would be from half a mile to two or three miles in the rear of the trenches, firing over them at the enemy, who, of course, was also firing over the trenches in order to reach the artillery positions.

So long as the artillery fought each other the men in the trenches could with perfect calmness listen to the duel—but the disconcerting fact was that one never knew at what instant Fritz would change and bombard the forward positions. Day after day I would listen to this thing. Occasionally there would be lulls when perhaps only one gun was firing rather lazily, and then it was that one had the best opportunity of listening to the roar of the gun, followed immediately by the " Wh-ee-e-e " of the shell passing overhead, and then a moment or two later would be heard the dull boom as the shell exploded two or three miles away.

The portion of Alsace held by the Americans and French was swarming with traitors and

spies who continually signaled the Germans. A number of these were caught and punished, several times as many were not caught, and a few were discovered but not arrested. This seems strange, at first. But the Americans, especially, found that by permitting these traitors to come and go apparently unsuspected, and watching them, much could be learned.

For instance, I know of a certain battered village far over in Alsace that was occupied by American troops. A few civilians clung to the place, also, and among them were one or two who were soon spotted as spies. A close watch was kept on these fellows, and always their actions were a sure indication of what to expect from the Germans with whom they were in communication. On more than one occasion when these traitors were seen to suddenly leave the village for points back of the lines the American officers promptly ordered their men to shelter just in time to escape the bombardments the Germans put over. The traitors knew when the firing was to commence and left. The Americans acted on the fact. These

men, watched as they were, unconsciously served our troops and were able to do but little harm.

In these villages in Alsace occupied by the American and French troops German was the prevailing language, although nearly everybody spoke more or less French. They pretended the most devoted loyalty to the Allied cause, but nobody of the Allied armies was badly fooled. Out in the front lines night after night we could look back and see strange signals, but only occasionally were these traitors caught in the act. And in the daytime they would use the most innocent-appearing means of signaling.

One old woman used to take her cows to pasture each morning. Vigilant, keen-minded Yanks soon noted that there was something rather odd about her procedure. One morning she would take one cow, another morning two cows herded closely together, on another morning the cows would be widely separated, and perhaps on another morning a piece of old carpet would lie across the back of one cow. Carefully watching her, they discovered that

she had rather an elaborate signal code that she used daily by means of her cows. She spent the remainder of the war in close imprisonment.

Of course, along the front lecturing and all similar work was very uncertain, as conditions were constantly changing, and so were the troops. Oftentimes a lecture, entertainment, or even a church service planned for a certain place had to be abandoned because of heavy shelling that drove everybody to dugouts and bomb-proofs.

In many places I visited, men were not permitted to assemble in groups of more than three or four for fear of drawing the German fire. The enemy's aëroplanes were over us continually, and their observation balloons—"sausages," as they were called—were equally observant of all activity in the trenches and immediately in the rear. I have known the assembling of half a dozen men about a pump to bring a dozen German shells, the result of the assemblage having been spotted and reported to a German battery by one of their planes. As a consequence, a guard was usually posted

at such places whose duty it was to see that the man who came for water did not loiter to swap yarns with others.

But the army officers gave us every assistance and privilege compatible with proper precautions for the safety of their men, and our entertainers played and sang in the trenches, in the dugouts, in the cellars of demolished houses—anywhere a squad of men could be assembled. My experience as a lecturer along the front was similar. One did not expect vast audiences up there.

And, as I have remarked, one sometimes drove to certain points expecting to be greeted by an audience of Yanks only to find that the outfit had been moved and a detachment of French had taken possession. I remember one fruitless visit of this kind that I made over in Alsace that had its humorous features. When I arrived at the hut, about a quarter of a mile in the rear of the front trenches, I found that only a few American soldiers were in that sector, and that the place was being held by Indo-Chinese.

A moving-picture show had been promised

the Chinese for that evening preceding my address to the Americans, and the "Chinks," as the Americans called them, crowded the little hut to the door. The odor was something terrible, and one by one the few Americans in the hut got up and made their way to the fresh air —all but one Yank who was tremendously interested in the picture and solved the problem by donning his gas-mask. Thus protected against the odors he enjoyed (?) the movie.

But when it was over the stench—for it was nothing less—still clung to the place, and the lecture was declared off. The next morning more than a hundred of these Chinese were casualties as the result of a gas attack. I might remark in passing that the testimony was that these Chinese troops fought well on the defensive. Given a section of trenches and told to hold it, they would do so, stubbornly, crouching and sheltering themselves as best they could when under bombardment, and then springing to the parapet and vigorously repelling whatever infantry attack might follow the shelling. But they were of slight use on the offensive, which caused one wag to remark that it seemed

very strange—as "the Chinks certainly were offensive enough at any time."

Whenever possible the chaplains or the Y. M. C. A. men held religious services along the front, even though the services were necessarily brief and often broken up by attacks. These services were always welcomed by the men, so far as my experience went, and I feel qualified to testify as I visited many sections of the front lines.

Would you know the four cardinal sins of the soldiers—as declared by the soldiers themselves? I will tell you. A questionnaire was distributed among the men and the list as revealed by this vote resulted in the following, in the order named: Cowardice, Selfishness, Stinginess, Bragging. I offer the list without comment.

Since returning home I have heard much discussion—some of it in tones that approached awe—concerning "the soldier's religion," and "the religion of the trenches." I have seen evidences that churches were uncertain as to just what this meant or would mean; I have observed that many folks imagined that the

American soldier over there had discovered and hugged to his soul something strange and new in religion, and that when he came home he would have this Something all ready to be turned loose on a breathless and wondering nation. All of which is bosh—nothing less.

The American soldier over there clung to the good, old-fashioned (if I may be permitted the expression in this connection) religion of his forefathers. The "religion of the trenches" was the religion he had known in the little country churches and in the cities of his homeland. There was nothing new about it. It was the religion that had comforted his mother and his father and their mothers and fathers. And he wanted his religion kept clean and untainted.

I have heard people say that they supposed one would have to be "very diplomatic" in discussing religion with the soldiers in France, and that no doubt experience taught that it was best to interest the men in something else first and then adroitly bring in the religious phase. With all of my power I deny this. I declare emphatically that no one ever had to apologize

to an American soldier for discussing religion with him. When we had a religious service we proclaimed it as such, and the men came gladly. We did not camouflage it with a lot of stunts.

The American soldier is "square," and he wants to be treated "on the square." To my notion that is the essence of Christianity, the very life blood of the religions of our forefathers—and that is the "religion of the trenches." That is what the American soldier will expect of America—and especially of those who profess to be followers of God. Over there at grips with death they came to despise hypocrisy as never before, perhaps, and to admire the true, the sincere, and the steadfast with all the devotion of their souls.

They rejoice in tearing away shams and masks, and only those who have affected these shams and masks in religion need worry about "the soldier's religion."

CHAPTER XXII

PATROLS AND AIRMEN

THE dugouts, the same as the trenches, were of various dimensions. Some were mere holes dug in the side of the trenches—damp, unventilated caves in which soldiers were crowded in a distressing, but necessary, way—while others were quite commodious and pleasant.

The biggest dugout I was ever in was in the side of a hill, and was about sixty feet below the surface. Large forest trees grew over it. The opening was protected by heavy timbers and sand-bags, and thick blankets suspended at three different places, about five feet apart, in the entrance tunnel served as gas curtains. When gas attacks came these blankets were dropped and served to keep the gas out of the dugout.

This entrance tunnel extended straight back into the hill a distance of forty-five paces;

about fifteen feet from its end a cross tunnel extended about twenty paces to the left and about thirty paces to the right. Heavy beams and braces rendered the dugout proof against collapse. Opening off from this cross tunnel were little "rooms" where the men slept. There were also bunks in tiers all along the cross tunnel. The place was lighted by electricity obtained by means of power furnished by a waterfall a short distance from the place. This dugout was well ventilated, having another opening for entrance or exit carefully hidden among some underbrush back in the forest, winding steps cut in the earth leading to it from the tunnels.

From the trenches listening-patrols would crawl out into No Man's Land every night, stealthily making their way right up to the German trenches or outposts and carefully noting all activity, such as marching troops, unusual truck train movements, etc., and oftentimes overhearing conversations carried on by the Germans.

For this extremely perilous duty no details were made, as a rule, but always the officer in

charge found a larger list of volunteers than he could use. I have known American boys whose duties kept them back of the trenches during the day to plead for the chance to join a listening-patrol in No Man's Land at night. Usually these patrols blacked their faces, the better to escape detection when the enemy fired flare-shells which lighted up No Man's Land with a brilliance that boded ill for all who were prowling about out there.

When these flare-shells were fired there was only one thing for the members of the patrols to do, and that was to lie as motionless as the dead until the flares faded. Oftentimes bugs and mosquitoes bit and tortured them until only the most supreme self-control could keep the men motionless, but not a muscle did they dare move. And all the time while lying there beneath the light of these flare-shells they knew that any breath might be their last, for keen German eyes scanned every foot of the ground, and not infrequently showers of bullets swept the field.

Only the coolest and most daring were fit for such important service. It was my good for-

tune to number among my friends one of these scout officers, Lieutenant J. T. Hale, Jr., of the 125th Infantry, afterward promoted to captain for gallantry, and invalided home severely wounded. Under his guidance I saw much of the territory covered by his patrols, with him I crawled out through the barbed wire into No Man's Land to "have a look," and with him I visited a cleverly concealed observation-post. This observation-post was so camouflaged that no enemy was likely to detect it, and it was so strongly protected by railroad rails and sand-bags that only a direct hit by a big shell would have destroyed it. Yet from that little place one looked out through interstices with powerful telescopes and field-glasses across No Man's Land and had a good view of the German lines and the towns back of the German lines, a view that extended miles in any direction.

Just in front of us lay the ruined, deserted village of Aspach-le-bas, about midway between the American lines and the German trenches. I have seen No Man's Land at many other points, and each view always held much

of interest, for no section of it was like any other portion, and yet whenever I think of No Man's Land my memory brings me the picture of Aspach-le-bas as I saw it one July day, its battered walls and roofs standing silent and shimmering in the midsummer heat, the coloring of its stone walls and red-tiled roofing, together with its absence of life, suggesting a great panoramic painting. Everywhere was desolation.

At night this village was usually occupied by German outposts and patrols, and often during the daytime the Americans crawled forward and entered the place, the Germans withdrawing at daylight. It was almost exactly in the center of the strip between the lines, and was jokingly referred to as the capital of No Man's Land.

Every one has read much concerning the extensive use of barbed wire by both sides, and yet no words can give even a faint conception of the perfect wilderness of this wire that marked the front and " near-front " in France, for you must know that there were vast quantities (one is tempted to mix metaphors and in-

discriminately refer to "wildernesses" and "oceans" and "forests" in trying to depict quantities) of this wire strung over great areas back of the lines. Long before one reached the trenches he made his way through barbed wire defenses. These behind-the-line defenses of wire were not closely connected, however. Wide gaps were left in them, through which troops and supplies could move without hindrance, but which could very quickly be closed behind retreating troops, if a retirement ever became necessary.

There were usually three or four lines of this wire, the lines being ten to twenty-five feet apart. The wire was on posts and trestles from three to five feet high, the lines zigzagging here and there across the country in a most confusing way, a scheme that trebled the defensive value of it. The different lines of wire were also connected with entanglements of wire, so that the term, "wilderness" seems to me to best describe it. In many cases light X-shaped frames were used. On these the wire was strung profusely, and this gave a portable wire defense, it being possible to move these en-

tanglements here and there as might be desired.

One of the questions that every man over there used to propound to everybody else, with never a reply, was this: "What will be done with all of this wire after the war—and how will they do it?"

Men going on listening-patrol into No Man's Land generally covered their steel helmets with cloth or else laid them aside entirely, wearing their caps instead, because it was practically impossible to crawl through the entanglements without frequent "ping," "ping," "ping" of helmet against the wire. Most of the helmets worn by the Indo-Chinese troops were made with a thin covering of cork over the steel, because of this necessity for silence in crawling through wire. Perhaps there were other troops who had such protected helmets. If so, I did not see them.

The day I visited the trenches before Aspach-le-bas—which is directly opposite the important city of Mulhausen, then German, and into which I could look with glasses and note the city's activity—the German planes were

over us as usual, scouting and searching for battery positions and such other information as they might be able to get. The result was that our ground batteries were firing at the planes continually, which fact did not disturb us except when the planes would reach a point directly above us, and then the shrapnel and shell fragments from our own guns would shower all around us, dropping from a height of fifteen thousand feet or more, where the shells had exploded.

These fragments were of various sizes and would rain down through the trees with a low whining sound, as if a multitude of insects were singing monotonously. When this happened there was but one thing to do—get into a dugout as quickly as possible, for a shell fragment falling from a height of fifteen thousand feet was no nice thing to receive on top of the head, helmet or no helmet. I never knew of any one being killed in this way, but it is little short of a miracle that many were not.

I have been in towns just back of the lines where batteries were firing at German planes directly overhead, the shrapnel and fragments

of shells raining down in the streets, and yet I never heard of any one being hit, although it must be that there were cases of serious injury from this cause. People would hug close to the buildings and go on about their business while the planes buzzed, the guns roared, and the fragments rattled. Of course, these planes were scouting for information and were not doing any bombing.

Really, it is fascinating—or always was to me—to watch the ground batteries firing at planes. Up there fifteen thousand feet—perhaps higher—one can just faintly make out the planes, dim specks apparently the size of a hawk, but even at that height the telltale sound of the motors can be heard, and all about the specks little puffs of white or black smoke will break out in the sky and go floating lazily away, the explosion of the shells coming to the watchers below with a faint sound like unto the bursting of a sky-rocket at a great height. On clear days photographs of ground positions could be taken from a height of from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand feet.

Sometimes shells with white smoke were used

and sometimes shells with black smoke. Gunners have given me different reasons for the use of the two kinds of shells, but the majority of them said that they used shells with the kind of smoke that would best show on the background against which they were shooting. Thus, if they were firing against a cloudless blue sky they would use white smoke, for it can be easily seen against the background of blue, while they would use black smoke if the planes were flying with a background of fleecy white clouds. This enabled them to "spot their shots" easily and made it easier for other batteries farther away and not yet in the action to trace the course of the planes.

It is doubtful if there was any phase of fighting that depended more on chance than did the work of the batteries firing at planes. I have never seen any statistics on the subject, but I am sure that figures would show that thousands of shots were fired at planes to every machine that was hit. This is no reflection on the gunnery. But the fact is that it was but little more than chance if a plane were hit—unless, of course, the machine was flying very low, in

which case the machine-guns, drenching the air with a torrent of bullets, had a good chance to make a hit. But even this would be more or less of a chance.

Nevertheless, whenever a plane came within range the batteries banged away at it so long as it could be reached. But the fact that they seldom struck a plane does not mean that the firing of the batteries was a useless waste. Oftentimes they did not fire with the expectation of a hit. They simply put up a barrage in front of the planes that perhaps would force the airmen to turn back.

This was the plan of the anti-aircraft batteries defending Paris and other cities. They fired not at the machines—except in occasional instances, perhaps—but in front of them, to throw up such a barrier of death that no airmen could pass.

Very often the barrage was effective in this way, putting such a wall of bursting shells in front of the planes that the flyers dared not attempt to go through. I have seen many planes forced to turn back because of this barrage, and I have also seen many planes that turned,

circled, flew this way and that in an attempt to deceive the gunners, and then suddenly dashed forward again at full speed, crossing the barrage in safety.

Of course, these planes had to undergo a continual fire from the time they were first discovered until they finally got back across their own lines, for as soon as they would escape one battery they would enter the zone of another battery, and so on, stormed at with machine-guns and 75's unceasingly, and oftentimes attacked by other airmen. I have seen planes maneuver and dash safely through the fire of one battery only to be shot down by another battery farther on. It takes unfaltering courage to be an airman.

I used to marvel at myself as I watched the batteries hurling death at the men flying so high above me. I do not love suffering and horror; I have always felt sincere in my sympathy for my fellow man; I hate war and all of its terrible destruction of the young manhood of nations; I never saw a German prisoner without thinking that he was near and dear to some one, that probably an old mother

was breaking her heart because of his dangers, and I never was able to stifle the hope that he would live to comfort her. And yet ——

As I watched the planes and saw the shells breaking all about them, I felt the most intense eagerness to see the shrapnel reach its mark, to see those machines and their human masters brought crashing to earth. What peculiar twist is there in the human make-up that permits this? It is war. That does not explain (at least not satisfactorily to me), but what other explanation is there? It becomes an impersonal matter. My intellect told me that up there were human beings—Germans, yes, but probably pretty decent fellows, doing their duty as the accident of birth had given them to see their duty, men who were respected and honored by those who knew them, and whom I doubtless would have respected and honored had not the breath of war blown us into two separate worlds—but in spite of all that my intellect told me, I found myself breathlessly watching the bursting shells and eagerly longing to see them wreak their work of destruction.

I cannot understand it. Perhaps you can. Until such a twist in the human make-up is understood and overcome, war with its awfulness will continue to be a possibility.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CROSSROADS UNDER FIRE

I HAD been invited to take dinner that day with some of the officers in their dugout in the front-line trench, and after several dodgings into shelter to escape the falling fragments from our anti-aircraft shells I reached the place and was cordially received.

We ate what the circumstances of the occasion permitted us to have, and were thankful for every mouthful, all of it having been brought up from some point in the rear by men who faced death in carrying food to their comrades in front.

I have heard a few returned soldiers complain that they were not well fed while at the front, but I have heard multitudes of others, who grasped the facts, say, in substance: " Yes, we were on short rations at times; there were occasions when we lived on hardtack and leaves for a day or two—but probably a dozen boys had died trying to get the food to us."

And this is the truth of the matter. I have been in the front lines under fire and have myself seen those heroic details coming up from the rear, bringing food to the boys in the trenches, braving the roaring, shrieking, crashing shells in order that their comrades might have the food that was due them. To my mind, no more gallant deeds were performed than the courageous service rendered by these men.

While we partook of the meagre dinner on this day the shells were screaming over us, an American battery and a German battery having begun a duel.

In an adjoining room of the dugout I heard a guitar strumming. Opening the connecting door, I looked in. A sergeant with his helmet tilted rakishly over one ear was seated on a keg, fingering the guitar and softly singing:

"Oh, the infantry, the infantry,
With dirt behind their ears;
The infantry, the infantry,
They don't get any beers;
The cavalry, the artillery,
And the lousy engineers,
They couldn't lick the infantry
In a hundred million years."

After finishing our meal we smoked and "visited." One of the officers, a boyish lieutenant, lighted his cigarette, yawned, and remarked:

"These front trenches constitute the greatest rest cure in the world."

His name was John Champagne, and less than a week later he was killed instantly. Of the three other officers who sat at that table, Lieutenant Crabbe was severely wounded the same day, Lieutenant Lawrence Smith was gassed, and Lieutenant Hale was severely wounded a little later. Such is the "rest cure" of the front lines. Before the war ended fourteen officers of that battalion of the Thirty-second Division met death in the fighting in Alsace, on the Marne, around Soissons and Juvigny, and in the Argonne. At the close of the fighting in the Argonne only one out of the battalion's thirty-three officers was on his feet.

After dinner we returned to Michelbach, the little village just back of the trenches where battalion headquarters had been established. This had once been a village of perhaps 200 souls, but now it was battered and wrecked and

all of its former inhabitants had fled except one old man and his wife. They elected to remain and die in their home if die they must.

Communication-trenches led from the village to the front line, so that one could make the entire journey without exposing himself above ground. Here Major Matthews was in command, a splendid type of gentleman and a gallant soldier who was soon to give his life for the Cause. All that day I had carried the Major's forty-five automatic, as I had come into this sector without my own and the Major had insisted on removing his own belt and pistol and buckling it about me before I left Michelbach for the trenches.

In the dugout at noon the officers had explained to my Y. M. C. A. companion (a driver of a traveling canteen) and me something about the shelling schedule followed by the Germans, for you should know that along the established front the Germans had accurately registered every important crossroads and other points, and these places they shelled at certain hours as regularly as clockwork, the reason for this being that experience had

taught that it was only at such hours that those points could be used to the best military advantage. Therefore, instead of shelling them in a haphazard way all day, they concentrated their fire at such times as would give the best results. We made careful note of the information given us, as it was of the utmost importance that we should know where we were most likely to be caught in a " shelling bee." Finally the officers referred to a certain crossroads.

" If you ever have to pass that crossroads," the spokesman said, " do it before 4: 30 in the afternoon, or else hit it with all the speed you can coax out of your machine."

I knew the spot, and so did my companion—and we both knew that we had to drive along that road that afternoon, for I was to go to another camp to lecture that evening, a fact that the officers did not know, and which we did not mention, even though we exchanged glances.

Back in Michelbach we opened up our canteen and served the soldiers, who formed in a long line, keeping close to the side of an old stable in order that they might have the protection, scanty as it was, of its projecting, tile-

covered eaves, for a boche plane was over us again, our batteries were giving it a hot time, and the fragments and shrapnel were falling very close to us.

Not far away, but on the opposite side of a little hill, an American battery of 75's was firing over us, and this plane was striving to locate the guns. Presently the German artillery opened in reply, and for a time the shells flew thick and fast in both directions. But the Germans had made a poor guess as to our battery position, or else their gunners were inefficient in their work, for all of their shells were falling short, falling on the " near side " of the hill, just a short distance from where Major Matthews and I were standing watching the line, the aëroplane, an observation-balloon a few miles away, and the bursting shells from the German battery. Clouds of dirt flew high in the air wherever they struck, but I was rejoicing in the fact that the enemy's shells were falling short, when I heard the Major suddenly exclaim:

" Wow! O gracious! "

I looked at him in surprise, thinking he had

discovered some calamity unobserved by me. He was staring at where the German shells were breaking, and I heard him mutter another exclamation.

"What's the matter, Major?" I asked. "Those shells are all falling short, aren't they?"

"Yes," he replied. "They're falling short—but they're falling kerslap into a patch of strawberries I have been watching get ripe!"

More crashes, more geysers of dirt from the strawberry patch, and more groans from the Major.

"It's a tough war," he said.

Only a short time afterward he fell in action, and to-day he sleeps beneath the lilies of France, one of the millions of heroic soldiers who gave their lives that we who live might have a new world.

At last the long line of soldiers at the traveling canteen dissolved, the driver packed up his remaining stock, and called to me that he was ready to start whenever I was. I glanced at my watch. It was five o'clock. The driver looked at his watch at the same time, and then

he looked at me—and I looked at him. He did not say a word, and neither did I. He knew what I was thinking, and I knew what he was thinking. We were both remembering what we had been told:

" If you ever have to pass that crossroads, do it before 4:30 in the afternoon, or else hit it with all the speed you can coax out of your machine."

It was now five o'clock—and the crossroads was on our travel program. The driver grinned at me, and I tried to grin in reply. Then we cranked up and started.

The evening's artillery activity was opening up. Shells were " we-ee-e-e-ing " over us at ever-shortening intervals. Our road was a tortuous one through a heavy forest, and now and then the shells sent branches and bark flying, or tore gaping craters in the ground on either side of the road. We were buzzing along at a pretty good speed—and glad of it. Suddenly we shot around a curve and there ahead of us lay the crossroads.

" There she is! " exclaimed the driver.

" Uh-huh! " I answered briefly.

"We-ee-e-e-crash!" "We-ee-e-e-crash!" Another crater opened close beside us and the shell fragments whined viciously. Then we hit the crossroads, but the driver forgot for the instant that I was to lecture in Sentheim and started to turn in the wrong direction. Remembering, he slapped on the brake, shut off the power—and killed the engine. "We-ee-e-e-crash!" came a shell too close to be enjoyed.

Right there and then I broke the world's record for speed in cranking a car. Quicker than a ground-squirrel I was out of my seat, had given the crank a vigorous whirl and was back in the car, which quickly backed, turned to the left and shot away from that neighborhood with a speed that was comforting.

"And you weren't killed?" asked a little girl who heard me spinning the yarn after I got home. I'll tell you the truth.

I wasn't.

CHAPTER XXIV

A VISIT TO ENGLAND

THUS the days passed, until at the close of July I was informed that arrangements had been made to send me to England and Scotland to speak in the American camps in those countries, and from there I was to return to America temporarily, to assist in the speaking campaign in the United War Work drive.

I would not be truthful were I to say that the news brought me no joy, and neither would it be a fact were I to say that the prospect of soon leaving the fighting lines brought nothing but joy. The thought that in the comparatively near future I was to be in America once more, back with my loved ones, was almost intoxicating in its pleasure—and yet I found that there was a distinct sense of regret in my soul that I was leaving this tremendous drama

in which I had been permitted to have a part, and of which I had seen much.

Back in Paris once more I was kept at top speed in getting my passports and other traveling papers properly made out, and there may be a bit of humor in the fact that the only article stolen from me in France was my raincoat, which was stolen from me in the office of the Prefect of Police in Paris while I was having my passport viséd.

Then good-bye to wonderful Paris. At Le Havre I took passage for Southampton, England, and at 9: 30 at night, without a light showing, we slipped away from our pier and started across the Channel, guarded by two British destroyers.

The crossing was made without incident, although the fact that subs were lurking there for prey was proven by the torpedoing of a hospital ship with heavy loss of life the next night while the vessel was crossing to England with her freight of maimed and suffering humanity.

There were many delays in getting out of Paris and in getting aboard the boat at Le Havre, owing to the strict watch that was being

kept upon all travelers. It was one examination and inspection after another, trying and nerve-exhausting to one who was genuine and loyal, so I am sure that the traitor and spy must have had a sorrowful and anxious time of it while traveling.

When our baggage was inspected at Le Havre every newspaper and magazine was examined, and from them were torn all pages containing advertising. The reading matter was permitted to pass, but spies had been using advertisements as a means of conveying information, and so all these were torn out.

At Southampton there was more delay while our papers were being examined, but at last we were on board the "boat train" for London. Just as we were pulling out of the station at Southampton my heart leaped for joy, for on the side of a building I had spied a big sign in English: "So-and-So's Little Liver Pills."

Very commonplace, you may say. Nothing of the kind. For months I had seen nothing but French signs and placards, and now here was something in my native tongue. It was poetry! It was joy! It was an old friend! I

waved my hand toward the sign, and cared not what others in the compartment might think.

When I reached London I had the usual scramble for my baggage, for it might be stated for the benefit of those who have never been abroad that in the British Isles one's baggage is not checked. It is in France, a number and the name of one's destination being pasted on the article and the traveler being given a corresponding slip, but in the British Isles there is no checking. One simply drags his baggage around—or tips a porter to do it—tells a porter his destination and tips him to pile the baggage into the van, as the baggage car is called. A slip bearing the name of the town to which the traveler is destined is pasted on the article, which is then put into the van, but there is no claim check for it. Neither is there any one in the car in charge of the baggage. At each station the car is opened by the officials of the railway, and porters and passengers climb in and toss out whatever pleases them. Then the traveler tips a porter to take his baggage from the car or platform to the taxi or the "left lug-

gage " room, as they term the parcel-checking department. In this " left luggage " room one may leave anything from a pocket-comb to a big trunk for about four cents a day.

Traveling in the British Isles was almost as difficult as in France. In France one had to satisfy the military police at the depots and then report to the provost marshal with his credentials, both before leaving a town and after reaching his destination.

In the British Isles alien civilians—and I was rated as a civilian—were provided with identity books, obtainable from the police. These books contained twenty-two questions—some of them having " a," " b," and " c " sections—which the alien (it seemed queer to be called an alien) must fill out, and his photograph must also be pasted in the book. The questions covered every point of personal description, nationality of applicant and the applicant's parents, name of wife, names of children, date of arrival in the United Kingdom, particulars of any service in any army, navy or police force, giving the name of his company and regiment, when mustered in, when mus-

tered out, rank attained, and a lot of other questions closely relating to these.

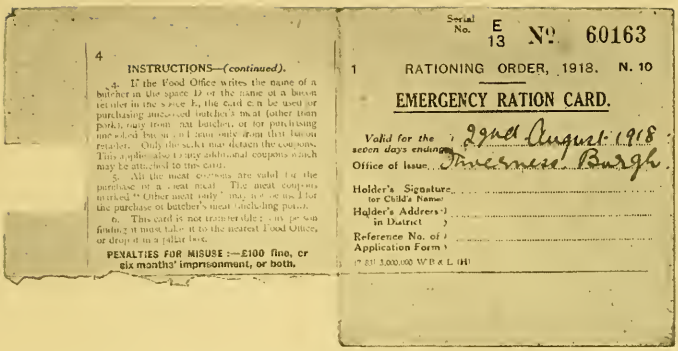
If one desired to leave town he must present himself at police headquarters, ask permission to leave and have his identity book stamped with a permit for him to go to such place as he had indicated. Upon arrival at the new place the traveler had to report immediately to police headquarters and have his book stamped. Always he must "register in" and "register out."

When one sought a hotel he was required to fill out a blank, giving particulars about himself, where he came from, and upon departure he had to add to the blank a statement as to where he was going. These blanks were placed in the hands of the police by hotel-keepers. The police of the town to which the traveler was bound were notified by the police of the town he was leaving, so that he was traced continually. French hotels also required the filling out of such information blanks.

I found London as dark as Paris at night, with great searchlights constantly crisscrossing the heavens in search of aëroplanes or Zeppe-

lins. And I found food conditions decidedly worse than they were in Paris. In London it was necessary to produce a food-card for almost everything one ate—except bread. Oddly enough, they did not ration bread, as they did in Paris. But the bread they served was the vilest stuff I ever ate. I know not what it was made of, but from the taste I always suspected that an assay would show strong traces of sawdust.

If one ordered meat he had to produce his card, from which a tiny section would be torn; and one had to buy his own sugar (producing a card when he made the purchase) and take it to the table with him. It was a very common sight to see some generous one saying to a sugarless one at the table, " Permit me to offer you some sugar," and then he would pull from his pocket a tin box or an envelope containing sugar, and offer it. For some queer reason they gave one all the butter he could eat for breakfast, putting it on the table on large dishes, from which the guests cut whatever amount they wished, but at no other meal could one obtain enough butter to grease a hazelnut.



4

INSTRUCTIONS—(*continued*).

4. If the Food Office writes the name of a butcher in the space D or the name of a bacon retailer in the space E, the card can be used for purchasing unrecorded butcher's meat (other than pork), only from that butcher, or for purchasing unrecorded bacon and lard only from that bacon retailer. Only the seller may detach the coupons. This applies also to any additional coupons which may be attached to this card.

5. All the meat coupons are valid for the purchase of a meat meal. The meat coupons marked "Other meat only" may not be used for the purchase of butcher's meat (including pork).

6. This card is not transferable; any person finding it must take it to the nearest Food Office, or drop it in a pillar box.

PENALTIES FOR MISUSE:—£100 fine, or six months' imprisonment, or both.

Serial No. E 13 No. 60163

1 RATIONING ORDER, 1918. N. 10

EMERGENCY RATION CARD.

Valid for the seven days ending 22nd August 1918

Office of Issue Inverness Burgh

Holder's Signature for Child's Name

Holder's Address in District

Reference No. of Application Form

17 831 3,000,000 W B & L (H)

FRONT OF THE ENGLISH FOOD CARD.

ANY ADDITIONAL MEAT COUPONS TO BE ADDED HERE.

2 INSTRUCTIONS TO HOLDER.

1. The meat coupon represents a quarter of the ordinary adult weekly ration. The butter, margarine, tea, sugar, lard and other coupons represent the ordinary weekly ration.

2. Any coupons attached to this card are valid only if the whole card is produced. Additional coupons may be attached to the card by Food Offices in exceptional cases. None of the coupons on this card for any additional coupons are valid except during the seven days mentioned on the front cover.

3. If the Food Office writes the name of a retailer in any of the spaces A, B, C, F or G, the coupons to which the space relates can only be used with the retailer named. Only the seller may detach the coupons.

For the remaining instructions see page 4 of this card.

SPARE SPACE II.

SPARE SPACE I.

3 A. Butter or Margarine Retailer:—

B. Sugar Retailer.

C. Lard Retailer:

D. Butcher.

E. Bacon Retailer:

F. Tea Retailer:—

G. Spare.

EMERGENCY. BUTTER or MARGARINE

EMERGENCY. LARD

This Space not to be used	EMERGENCY. CHEESE (If rationed)	EMERGENCY JAM (If rationed).	EMERGENCY. TEA	EMERGENCY BUTCHER'S OR OTHER MEAT a a	EMERGENCY. OTHER MEAT ONLY. d d	EMERGENCY BUTCHER'S OR OTHER MEAT b o

ENGLISH FOOD CARD.

This card was good for one week only, and was used for meat, sugar, and other rationed foods. The missing coupon at the end was used for buying sugar. The missing coupons at the lower corner were used for obtaining meat in a hotel. Usually, half a coupon was sufficient for a portion of meat in a hotel or restaurant.

The coffee served in London was unspeakable, but that did not worry many except Americans, for all who were English drank tea. All the almanac jokes about the English and their tea are true. At four each afternoon the whole world stops, so far as London (and the rest of England) is concerned, and they have tea. The business men have it served in their offices, or else they go to a restaurant or hotel for it. But they have tea somewhere. At four the lobbies of the hotels are cluttered with maids pushing teacarts up to brawny-looking Englishmen, who greet the outfit with all the evident happiness of a schoolgirl inspecting a new piece of tatting. They even stop the trains at some convenient place about four in the afternoon and everybody piles out and takes tea, which is served from long tables on the station platform.

I never obtained a glass of water in a London hotel without having to ask for it from one to three times, whereas in America a waiter sets out a glass of ice-water immediately.

"If water was rationed, you Americans

would have a hard time," remarked a waitress to me in a London dining-room.

"Why?" I asked, surprised. "Do Americans drink more water than other nationalities?"

"I should say so," she replied. "Americans are the greatest water-drinkers in the world. Just you notice after this."

I did. I made it my business to linger in the dining-rooms as long as possible, observing, and I never saw an American enter who did not at once begin to look around for water, and I never saw an Englishman order a glass of it. They seemed to get enough water in their tea.

Speaking of ice-water, let me say that I did not see such an article from the time I left New York until I boarded an American transport, the *Louisville,* for home.

I spent some time in England, visiting American camps and also some of the English camps, and like most other Americans I suffered severe nerve-shock whenever I rode along a crowded street, for over there traffic keeps to the left instead of to the right. Speeding through London's streets in an auto with an

English driver I would gasp when we got into a jam and the driver would turn to the left. In America it would mean an ambulance and the police court. Over there it was the way to safety.

By this time the Allies were driving the Germans steadily backward, and the English were elated with the wonderful showing made by America's fighting men. Their old soreness over our long delay in entering the war had disappeared, and it was freely stated by them that they had come to believe that it was better as it was, better that America had kept out until the time when she could strike with freshness and vigor against a wearied Germany. And, too, the English freely admitted that America had saved the day, and that had we not arrived when we did the Germans would have beaten the French and the English.

"We were exhausted—done for," they said. "The beggars would have won sure had it not been for America."

The English army officers admitted the fighting qualities of the Americans, but contended that we were suffering too heavily, that

our men were rash, that their impetuosity was the result of ignorance, and that they would "get over it."

"You're wrong," I said in reply. "I recognize your viewpoint, and confess that the Americans do not fight according to European technique. I do not deny that they are impetuous, and I'll admit that they will lose more heavily in the same length of time than would British soldiers—but they'll never get over it. It is their racial characteristic, and if the war lasts ten years they'll be fighting in the same way at the close of the tenth year. It is their philosophy—'Wade in, keep smashing, pay the price, end the war, and go home.'"

And I still contend that I was right. Our men did lose heavily—but they got results. They realized that they were paying a heavy price, but they argued that if the war were permitted to drag along the death-list would be even more heavy in the end.

"Why not pay the price now, get it over, and let the living ones go home?" they asked. But Europe could not understand.

The Americans became known as "rough

fighters," also, it is true. They had been goaded into war; they had heard so much of German treachery and cruelty, most of which was true, that indignation burned in their souls, for your Yank is a square, clean sport in everything, and he hates the other thing with a hatred most terrible; and after they had first gotten to France Germany had sneered and hooted at the American soldiers until every Yank over there was literally itching to tear up the boasted Prussians.

" Turn us loose and we'll show 'em whether or not we can fight!" they cried. And when they were turned loose they promptly kept their word and startled the world by their prowess.

War was not a kid-glove, pink-tea affair in their estimation, and they acted on that theory. The Germans had indulged in so much " kamerad " trickery and murder that the American soon decided to take no chances, and the boche who wished to surrender had to " walk turkey " and not wink at the wrong time or he was quickly gathered to his fathers. The presence of an American division soon came to be a mat-

ter of terror to the Germans opposite them, for when the Yanks started forward they kept going, fighting like devils, and the boches had to either run like rabbits, die, or surrender quickly and without any false motions.

England was thrilling with their triumphs.

CHAPTER XXV

IRELAND—LAND OF DISSENSION

THE marked characteristic of the American soldiers in England was an impatience to get across to the fighting lines in France. They fretted continually, and every rumor of their early departure for the battle front was greeted with enthusiasm. Theirs was a spirit that the horrors of the world's greatest war could not conquer.

After some time in England I went up to Inverness, in the far north of Scotland, and joined our sailors who were at work with the mines. And there I found the same eagerness to be sent to France, to join comrades fighting so resistlessly day by day.

An important and dangerous task was that to which these sailors were assigned, but it was hard for them to realize that they were doing their full share in the war.

"Why, we're hundreds of miles away from

the front," they complained, and it was my duty to point out to them how vital to the success of the Cause was the work they were doing. I traveled all over that section of Scotland, speaking to these sailors.

Shipload after shipload of mines arrived on the west coast, and there they were received by the American lads, who worked in day and night shifts unloading the mines, shipping them to another point, where they were assembled, placed on mine-layers and then deposited in waters where they would most effectively bottle up the German ships and submarines.

These boys were up there, in little hamlets on the coast, with nothing in their lives but hard work, bleak rocks, stormy skies, and rolling ocean. It was popularly asserted that it rained every day in one section I visited. I asked one of the " oldest inhabitants " if this were true.

" No," he replied. " Some days it snows."

I went on board the mine-laden ships and distributed stationery and books, I helped serve the shifts that changed at midnight, I talked to them at whatever hour and at whatever place a gathering could be arranged, and I found them

to be a remarkably clean, manly set of lads, eager to serve and worthy of the best traditions of the American navy. Among the many privileges that were mine beyond the sea during the war, I count none greater than that of being associated with these sailors.

And, too, America should come to know more fully than she does the wonderfully fine spirit of the Scotch people. I brought back with me a deeper love for the Scots than for any other people on the other side of the ocean. Clean-souled, sturdy, sincere, generous to a marked degree in their readiness to assist the boys from America, they deserve the most profound gratitude that our nation is capable of feeling—and expressing if occasion should ever offer. I am certain that every American sailor or soldier who sojourned in Scotland will bring home the same impression of the people of that nation, even though the kilts and their oddity of speech ofttimes amused the Yanks.

Finishing my work in Scotland, I went across to Ireland, sailing for Belfast from Ardrossan, a port on the Firth of Clyde, not far from Glasgow. As usual, we sailed at night—

midnight—with darkened decks. At seven in the morning we were in the harbor at Belfast.

There were not many American soldiers or sailors in Ireland, but there were a few, and these, too, were longing for something to happen that would send them to France.

The north of Ireland was having fairly good success in recruiting, although the most strenuous campaigns were in progress to secure soldiers for Great Britain's armies. Irish leaders were making speeches, pleading for enlistments and declaring to the people that Ireland was losing the sympathy and friendship of America because of her attitude, her refusal to rally to the support of the Cause for which Civilization was fighting.

In France and England one saw but few able-bodied men of military age who were not in uniform. Ireland was full of them. Her men were not in the armies except in comparatively small numbers. The food question seemed to be much less serious in Ireland than in any of the other countries.

Finally my journeying took me to Dublin, and in this section of Ireland I found seething

unrest. In this section there was but little success in recruiting. Dublin's streets were crowded with sturdy young men who scoffed at the pleas of the recruiting agents. The city still showed the ruin wrought by the uprising of 1916, when the post-office and many prominent buildings were destroyed by flames and gunfire. These ruins remained much as they were at the close of the fighting in the city on that occasion, nothing but the sidewalks having been cleared.

It is not for me to discuss the merits of the dissensions that have so sadly racked Ireland. I am but depicting the conditions that existed in late August, 1918.

Fresh from countries where every man and woman was straining to the utmost to further the Cause to which my America had so unreservedly committed herself, I was not made happy by my observations in Ireland, and I frankly say that I was glad when the hour came for me to return to England.

I sailed from Kingstown, on Dublin Bay, near Dublin, for Holyhead, on the ill-fated *Leinster,* a fast mail-boat that was sunk in the

Irish Sea some time afterward with a very heavy loss of life. The *Leinster* had no convoy, but trusted to her speed. Every passenger was ordered to don a life-belt the moment we left the pier at Kingstown, and these we kept with us during the three hours required in our dash across the moonlit Irish sea. As usual, not a light was permitted on deck. From Holyhead a waiting train took us to London, where we arrived in the morning, after about an eight-hours' run.

In London I received orders to be prepared to leave at an hour's notice for Liverpool, to sail for America. I was to make the homeward trip on an American transport, and every secrecy was thrown about the sailing plans of these ships. One had to be ready and await telegraphic orders.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE GLOW IN THE SKY

WHEN they did come, the orders were given me in a whisper, and two hours later I was on board a train for Liverpool, with instructions to report to the proper officer the next morning.

At the designated hour I presented myself and my credentials to the officials in Liverpool, the naval authorities checked up my papers and ordered me to report on board the *Louisville* before noon. It was then eleven o'clock, but by unstinted use of a taxicab I gathered up my baggage at the "left luggage" department in the railway station and in the hotel and went on board on time. Fifteen minutes after I boarded the ship, we left the pier and swung down the Mersey River.

But only for a short distance. Then we dropped anchor in the middle of the river and

lay there. No one could gather the least information as to when we would sail. Those matters were guarded as closely as the secret as to where Marshal Foch was to launch his next blow.

A strike of Liverpool dock laborers had made it necessary for the crew of the *Louisville* to coal the ship themselves. They had just finished the job when I boarded the vessel, and were heartily sick of it. As we swung at anchor in the middle of the river a coal barge passed us slowly. One of the colored boys among the *Louisville's* crew took a look and then turned his back to the barge.

"Coal!" he exclaimed. "Damn the stuff!" He glanced at me and thought that an apology was due because of his language. "I cain't help it, Cap'n," he said. "I just naturally git peeved now whenever I see coal!"

There we lay for more than twenty-four hours, with no one knowing when we would sail—at least, no one who would tell. But at 2:30 the next afternoon orders were spoken, and in a couple of minutes we were moving—moving toward America.

Joy thrilled those of us who were passengers, this list consisting of not more than fifty and being made up of wounded soldiers, naval officers ordered to New York to take command of other ships, and a number of officers of an American freighter that had been torpedoed and sunk.

At the mouth of the river we were joined by four other transports and a guard of five torpedo-boat-destroyers. With the transports in double column, the destroyers flanking us and scouting both ahead and in the rear of the transports, we steamed out into the Irish Sea and then turned northward.

Our first meal on board the *Louisville* brought me the realization of many months of longing. The colored waiter placed a glass of ice-water beside my plate before he took my order, and at the conclusion of the meal he asked:

"Will you have ice-cream, suh?"

I did.

It was the first ice-cream I had tasted since leaving New York, and I was craving it. I had visited a few Y. M. C. A. huts back of the

lines where ice-cream was made and served to the soldiers—but no secretary was permitted to taste it.

"What most impressed you when you got back to New York?" I have been asked frequently.

The things that most forcibly impressed me were the riot of light, the ice-cream signs, the windows full of cake and candy, children who laughed and played, and ice-water. The first night I spent in New York after landing at noon I strolled along Broadway, reveling in the electric display, drinking it in and soaking it in. I located a nice little establishment and went on an ice-cream debauch. I would eat a dish of it, then go outside, stand on the curb and take another bath in the wonderful light, after which I would go back and eat some more ice-cream. I have been told by one who feels that she has a right to correct me that I "ought to be ashamed to tell it." Perhaps. But I'm not. I'll compromise by not telling how many dishes of ice-cream I ate, but I will say that I came near not going to bed at all that night. I hated to shut out the light. It was

harder for me to drag myself out of its glare than it is for a small boy to leave a monkey-cage.

Yes, I took ice-cream when offered it on the *Louisville*.

Immediately after we had gotten under way the gun-crews were sent to their stations, shells were piled beside the guns, everybody was ordered into life-belts and another submarine-dodging voyage had begun, a voyage that lasted nine days and nights.

At that time the Irish Sea and the waters adjacent to the north coast of Ireland were favorite haunts for the undersea terrors, so that the utmost precautions were taken while we were in that vicinity. Vigilance was never relaxed, for that matter, but a double watch was on duty for the first three days and also during the last two days of our voyage.

It was decidedly interesting to watch the methods of our protection. The transports were constantly changing their sailing formation, the idea being to confuse a submarine commander should he note the formation of the little fleet and dive, expecting to find the same

formation and relative distances when his U-boat came to the surface to fire. The probabilities were that while the submarine was diving toward its intended prey our vessels would materially change their course and their relative positions, so that when the U-boat came up it would find itself entirely out of position, as a submarine can fire torpedoes in only one direction—straight ahead. Thus if it is out of position upon reaching the surface it must change before launching a torpedo.

And most comforting was it to observe the maneuvers of the destroyers. Sometimes there would be two on our right side and one on our left, and a short time later there would be two on our left and one on our right, while always one preceded us and one trailed us. The one ahead would zigzag across our bows continually, making wide sweeps, and the one in our rear did much the same thing, making wide zigzags, while the ones on our sides darted ahead, lagged, circled far out, crept close in, etc., etc., reminding one of trained hunting-dogs scouring a field for game. Besides their heavy gun equipment, each destroyer had at its

stern a pile of the deadly depth charges, the terror of submarines.

Going out the North Channel we ran into a very heavy storm, and for two days our vessels pitched, rolled and creaked in a manner that was most distressing to a landlubber. In fact, a number of sailors on the *Louisville*—one or two of whom had seen service on destroyers—were sick, so that I felt quite justified in being a wee bit unhappy. My trouble was that my only salvation lay in remaining on deck and getting the fresh air. I dared not lie down in my berth. The instant I did so the pangs of seasickness began to grip me.

So for two days I stood on deck—no chairs or benches were permitted out there, as the decks were stripped for action—clinging to the railing of the deckhouse while the heavy seas broke over the deck and gurgled about my ankles. I managed to spend a few hours each night in my berth, asleep, but I was pretty well wearied with the struggle by the time the sea grew calmer.

It was near midnight of the second day when the destroyers winked across the waves, with

flashes of light, the message: "Good-bye. Good luck." Then they turned back. Instantly from the bridge to the engine-room of each transport flashed the order, "Full speed ahead!" And in the darkness and the storm each transport, with engines throbbing their utmost, dashed ahead. From now on to the American coast it was to be each ship for itself and God for us all.

When the dawn crept over the sea the *Louisville* was alone. One ship was speedier than ours and had outrun us, while we had left the others in the rear.

It was September and very cold as we swung far to the northward, zigzagging continually. There came a night when with engines stopped we lay tossing on a fog-wrapped sea, our whistles moaning. Aside from the danger of a collision with some other ship, we dared not drive ahead in that fog, for signs of icebergs had been discovered. That the signs had not been misread was proven the next morning, when we sighted a huge, floating mountain of ice about four miles away. During that day we passed close to two other mammoth bergs,

and on each our gunners indulged in target practice with the five-inch guns.

One evening our wireless picked up a message from a freighter stating that it was being attacked by a submarine. Ten minutes later another message said that the U-boat was shelling its victim. Then the calls suddenly ceased.

The *Louisville* immediately changed her course and redoubled her watch once more, but did not attempt to seek the vessel supposedly in distress. Cowardly desertion, say you? Not at all. It was the iron-clad rule. It was a favorite little sport of U-boat commanders to send out such decoy messages and then torpedo the ships that went rushing to the rescue. That had been successfully worked in months and years gone by, until vessels were forbidden to heed such messages. So we steamed on our way, scanning every wave.

Dusk and dawn were the hours of greatest danger, for at those times submarines could see the huge bulks of ships while the U-boats were almost invisible.

Nearing the American coast our wireless gave us warning of the activities of submarines,

and we again changed our course to avoid the route we had expected to take in reaching New York harbor. Now we were in the Gulf Stream again, and the weather was delightful.

At last there came a night which we knew was to be the last of our voyage. The coast of our beloved America was near, and in the morning we would sail up New York harbor past the Statue of Liberty.

That last evening I told myself that I would be perfectly calm and sensible, that I would go to bed at the usual hour and sleep sweetly until morning. I kept part of the program. I went to bed at the usual hour. I undressed like a gentleman, lay me down in my berth, shut my eyes and said to myself, "I'm asleep." But my eyes wouldn't stay shut. I was thinking of the land toward which the *Louisville* was now slowly making her way, creeping cautiously forward in the darkness.

My roommate was sleeping calmly. That was what one should do, of course. Only children waiting for Santa Claus or the coming of the circus trains lay wide-eyed as I was doing.

It was very foolish of me. So I closed my eyes very tightly and resolutely, and again I murmured, "I'm asleep! I'm asleep!" I even tried to snore in order to deceive myself. No use. I sat up in bed.

"You're a fool, all right," I said to myself, "so why not admit it, let it go at that, and do what you're crazy to do. You're not asleep, you're not going to sleep, and you don't want to sleep. What you do want to do is to get out on deck and look for the first glimmer of your homeland."

I gave up. Dressing as quickly as I could—and as quietly as possible in order not to awaken the calm being in the other berth—I almost ran up to the promenade deck. Nothing but brooding darkness. The ship was slipping forward very slowly, the sea was dead calm, and utter silence prevailed. I leaned on the rail and strained my eyes toward where I knew land must be.

An hour or more went by. It was one o'clock when it seemed to me that far away, low down—along the very edge of the sea—I could detect a faint glow. Perhaps my strain-

ing eyes had played me a trick. I relaxed my vigil for a few minutes and rested my eyes by covering them with my hand. Then I looked again, and joy flamed into my soul. There was no doubt of it. A glow was on the horizon, and as we slowly steamed forward the glow rose higher and higher into the sky.

I leaned over the rail, unconsciously, in my effort to get closer to that gladdening light. I felt a touch on my arm, and, turning, saw a sailor standing by my side. He pointed toward the glow.

"Sir," he said in a low voice, "yonder is America!"

"Yes, yes," I replied in the same subdued voice, for, somehow, one felt that it was a moment for tenderness and reverence, "America! It's a wonderful land, lad."

"It's God's country, sir," he answered softly.

I turned slowly and looked at him. He was leaning forward with clasped hands, and I could see the rapt expression on his strong, handsome face.

"You're right, lad," I said. "It is God's

country. I used to hear it called that, and I thought it merely an idle phrase, but you and I have seen enough to know the truth, to know that our America is a God-loved and blessed country."

"Yes, sir," he said, slowly. "And I hope that our people will not forget. America has found her soul, sir, and I never come into this harbor at night without thinking that it is America's soul that I see glowing there in the sky."

He turned away to his duties, and I stood watching that glow, growing brighter and brighter, and I thought of it as the sailor lad had symbolized it—America's soul glowing in the sky.

And my thoughts flashed back to war-torn France, to the trenches, to the fields where so many of America's sons would die that day. I thought of how for more than three years Civilization had stood with its back to the wall, battling and looking across the sea and calling to the young giant of the new world, "America! America! Why don't you come?" And at last America had leaped to the side of Right

—and now by reason of her efforts Humanity was discovering a new glow in the heavens, a glow that rose and grew brighter. Truly, it was the soul of America.

Thousands of our youth had died on the battle-field. Thousands more must die there before peace would come. They had marched forth with our pledge that their sacrifices should not be in vain. Would America forget?

And the glow grew brighter and brighter until the dawn came and the rising sun made the world light. The Statue of Liberty came into view, the upraised hand welcoming us back from the perils of the sea and the sorrows of the desolated land beyond.

At noon I walked down the gangplank and stood once more on the soil of America. Joy? Ah, yes. But I could not forget the boys of that heroic army I had left over there. This proud, rich, wonderful America was being saved by their blood and suffering.

Would the glow of America's soul ever dim because of the heedlessness of a people triumphant?

RD 247

This was the question I asked myself that day. Often have I asked it since that landing hour.

What shall the answer be?

THE END

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